

John Jones M.D. 1776.

GRACE, GRACE:

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13 A. e. 8

The Exceeding Riches

O F

G R A C E,

Manifested to the Chiefest of

Sinners.

Being a Faithful RELATION of the
Dealings of GOD with the Vilest of
his CREATURES, Joseph Taylor.

In Four PARTS.

- I. Experiences in Child-hood.
- II. Those which he took for Conversion.
- III. Of his sad and lamentable Falls into Sin afterwards.
- IV. Of his present Conversion, and Call to the Ministry.

I Tim. i. 16. *Howbeit for this cause I have obtained mercy, that in me Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should believe in him to life everlasting.*

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the Bible, in Grace-Church-Street, 1702.



TO THE
READER.

Reader,

THOU hast here an Account of a miraculous Cure, wrought by Jesus Christ, on the Soul of a poor miserable Sinner; a Soul dead in Trespases and Sins, a Soul full of Wounds and Bruises, and putrefying Sores, spread all over with the Leprosie from Head to Foot; a Soul fit for nothing, in Common estimate, but to be a Companion with Devils in eternal Flames. Read my Case, and, I doubt not, but you will soon come to this Conclusion, that no Man's Guilt is greater, nor consequently, no Man's Case (as considered in himself) worse, yea, none so bad as mine. And, indeed, (provided you make not use of it to extenuate your own Sin, and bless your self in your own Condition) I think you cannot think too bad of it: But, notwithstanding (to the Praise of infinite Grace) you have here an Account such Sins are not too great for Christ to Pardon, nor such Diseases

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too bad for him to Cure: Of this, you have a very plain and faithful Account in the following Sheets; and should it be believed, it would exceedingly tend to throw down the Kingdom of Satan, and exalt the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in this Day and Age; and therefore I do not wonder that such a mighty Opposition is made against it. My Case is singular, and my Opposition is singular; and, why so? But, because there seems to be that in it which will be of singular use, if received; therefore Satan will raise up all manner of Opposition, and for this very Reason I expect it, but God will do his Work by it notwithstanding, and in his Hands I commit it. I have considered all these things in my own mind, and have thought, what if (1.) I should become the Song of the Drunkards, as David. They are only such Fools which make a mock at Sin. And who knows to how many, even of them, the Lord may bless this Experience of mine for their Conversion? My Lord shewed kindness to Publicans and Sinners, and overcame them with the Doctrine of free Forgiveness; and all as I shall say to them, is with the Prophet on the one hand, Isa. 28. 22. Now therefore be ye not Mockers, lest your Bands be made strong. And, with my dear Lord, on the other, Father Forgive them, for they know not what they do. (2.) What if I be the Mark and butt for the Pharisees to shoot at?

Yr

To the Reader

Yet the Blessing of Joseph shall come upon Joseph, Gen. 49. 23, 24. The Archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong, by the Hands of the mighty God of Jacob. *I am very sensible, this Account will Affront the zealous Pharisee, and formal Professor, and raise a mighty Storm against me, only for telling the truth; But tho; they don't know my Experience, I know theirs, and can tell what it is to be a Pharisee. A Pharisee is such a one that Professeth a mighty strict and exact Observation of the Law of God, that he might (as it were) be justified thereby: Of these, some were formal Hypocrites, and some were sincere: Of the last sort was Paul, who thought a strict observation of God's Commandments, was that Righteousness whereby he should obtain the Pardon of Sin, and the Favour of God; or, in one word, whereby he should be justified; and so did the Jews, Rom. 9. 33. Chap. 10. 1. 2, 3. They followed after this Righteousness, as the Condition of their Justification, or, that whereby they should be justified, and so being ignorant of the perfect Righteousness Christ performed in his own Person, They went about to establish their own Righteousness, &c. These I call Pharisees, that seek to be Justified by any Righteousness, whether Meritorious, or Conditional, by Moral, or*

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Positive Precepts, by Precepts written in the Old, or New Testament; I say, by any Righteousness, but that, which the Son of God; in our Nature performed Personally. And of these there are many Sects in this Day: and, among each Sect, some are very Hypocrites, and some are Sincere. Now, all these Sects must rise up as one common Person against this Experience, and Condemn it: And, methinks, I see them doing by me, as their Fathers did formerly by the Blind Man, on whom our Lord wrought such a Miraculous Cure, John 9. In the first place, they set themselves against believing the Miracle it self; and then they resolve to do their utmost to prevent others from believing it; and therefore they consult by which handle to take it: And, 1. They would fain deny matter of Fact, v. 18. But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been Blind, And therefore they called his Parents to know whether he was Born Blind, and how the Cure was wrought? and they scann'd the matter over, and over again, and so long, and so much, as the poor Blind Man ask'd them, Will ye be his Disciples also, v. 27. But they did not this to receive satisfaction, but to find Fault, and to try whether they could pick any holes in it. Thus, I doubt not, but they will do with me, and will twist and wind, and turn things, till they think they have found some circumstantial Mistake, and then

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then Trumpet it forth with mighty Acclamations. I have been as careful as I can; but I know a Pharisee so well, that if there be no mistakes, they know how to make some. (2.) If matter of Fact can't be denied, then several Circumstances respecting it, must be quarrel'd with.

First, They quarrel at the circumstance of Time, they quarrel'd at the Day, -on which his Cure was wrought; it was on the Sabbath-Day: And they quarrel at the Time of mine, tho' not the Day; it was done too soon. O! If he had lain many Years under Wrath, Grief, Horror, and Terror, so long as to put out one of the Windows of his Body with weeping, and crying out, O! I am Damned, I am Damned, then there might possibly have been some hope. But in this Point, I know there is a dissention between them, but whether I shall fare the better for it, as Paul did, Acts 23. 7. I know not. But,

2dly. If that will not do, they must quarrel with other parts of the Experience; and I have been all along tossed between two, who, tho' they pretend to differ about the Doctrine of Arminius and Calvin, yet agree in the Practice of the Pharisee; tho' they differ in the two first, they agree in the last. Pharisee is the Genus, whatever be the Differentia; and accordingly they both must play their Parts. The first must cry out, Calvinisme, Calvinisme, he hath Apostatized.

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Apostatized from the Truth, and hath received the worst of Errors, such as makes God the Author of Sin, and more cruel than the greatest Tyrant that ever lived on Earth; worse than the Ostreich, her self. He saith, He made Men on purpose to Damn them, and abundance more. The other part must cry out, Antinomianisme, Antinomianisme, he hath received a Licentious Doctrine, Principles that encourage and give liberty to Sin, that deny the Law to be a Rule; and that assert, that to believe our Sins are pardoned, is Justifying Faith, and abundance more of the same Brand; nay, these Principles are the fittest for him. My Friends, be still, and don't make such a noise; As for the Doctrine of General Redemption, I believe, I may truly say, I know every hole and corner of it. And I dare (thro' Grace, with that little light and understanding the Lord hath given me) undertake to shew the Soul-Destructive consequences thereof, and, at the same time, to deliver the Doctrine of Election, &c. From all those wry-Fac'd Consequences as they load it with. And, as for the Antinomian-Doctrine, I don't yet know what they call so; if it be to live without Law to Christ, to take liberty to Sin, because Grace abounds, or that any person shall go to Heaven that is not sanctified as well as justified, my Soul abhors the thoughts of it, and every Doctrine that hath such a tendency; and I am cer-
tain,

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tain, that they which constantly charge the Doctrine of free Justification, through the Redemption of Christ without Works, to be a Doctrine of Licentiousness, never yet felt the Power of the Grace of God in their own Hearts: For, this is the only Doctrine appointed of God for the destruction of Sin, and working Sanctification in Heart and Life. I speak not what use a Carnal Heart may make of it, who turns the most wholesome Food into Poison: But what it is in the Heart of him that Believes, and lives under the Power of it. I am sure, I may speak this with the greatest assurance, That such who know they shall not be condemned for Sin, are most afraid to commit it: That such which are Dead to the Law by the Body of Christ, Love, and Obey it most: That such, who know Repentance doth not obtain the Favour of God, neither by way of Merit nor Condition, repent of their Sins most of all; and, they which renounce their own Righteousness, and count it as filthy Rags, &c. are most Righteous: And, if this be Antinomianism (through Grace) I am an Antinomian; if this be to be vile, I must be more vile still. (4.) If Principles will not do, then they must search for some irregular Practices to charge me withal; and they must be either before my Conversion, or since. (1.) Before; and here they must rip up all as ever they can; and this they make no bones of, because they

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a Call, viz. the whole Church, to print this Experience: and it is past the skill of a Pharisee to noise them out of their Duty: It is not, what will the World say? But, what is it that Christ saith? What is it as his Word saith? And it will never be well with the Churches untill they can come to this. O, what a sad Condition are they in! How are they departed from Primitive Doctrine and Discipline! and tho' the Elders can't see it, yet there is a visible leaving, &c. as appears in the Book against Mr. P.; and now to Blaspheme, or speak Evil of the Work of the holy Ghost in me, They will object against my Confidence of my State: But, I must Answer, That, I believe I fare the better for their Opposition, and the Spirit shines the brighter upon his own Work for that very reason. That Text, respecting my Case, may truly be applied to them. God hath destroyed the Wisdom of the Wise, and brought to nothing the understanding of the Prudent. 1 Cor. 1. 19. Blindness in part, (viz. in this Case) hath happened unto them; and, no doubt, for Wise, Just, and Gracious ends; which will ere long, appear. I thought to have scratched out every word of this kind, in the whole Book, through a little temerity of Spirit, remembering how much sorrow I have gone through already; and, whilst I was thinking, I opened my Bible, and read my Eye on Jer. 1. 17. and these two verses

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verses came with exceeding power on my Spirit, and the warmth and influence of them have continued ever since with me. Thou therefore gird up thy loins and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee, &c. and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee. And that word hath been often with me, Surely the Wrath of Man shall praise thee: The remainder of Wrath shalt thou restrain, Psal. 76. 10. And I have often thought of Job, who, in the midst of his Affliction, had his Three Friends to misrepresent his own case to him, and to persuade him that he was an Hypocrite, when he knew to the contrary. Job therefore vindicates his own case to the very last, and so must I, for (through rich Grace) I know it is of the Lord, and when I am try'd, I shall come forth as Gold, and God will find out some way to manifest his own Work; and, in the mean time, I cannot but warn every Soul against ridiculing the Work of the Spirit in me, because of the nearness of this Sin to the Sin against the holy Ghost, Mat. 12. 32. And whosoever speaketh a word against the [Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, &c. Our Lord had wrought a Miracle, and they Blasphemed, and spake evil of it; and said, he cast

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and Devils by Beelzebub, here is a Miracle wrought, it is the Work of the Spirit: Don't speak against his Work, don't Blaspheme it, don't Ridicule it, it draws too near that Sin to be play'd and sported with; it is ill jesting with Edge Tools, The Day shall declare it; if it be of God it will stand, if not, it will come to nought: Therefore, saith Gamaliel, refrain, Acts 5. 38. lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.} God resolves to gloryfie himself by this miracle of Grace, you resolve to oppose it, and who do you think will prevail?

As for Believers, I am sure, they know the Language of the Spirit: You only are the proper judges of Experience: For the Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned: But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. They that think I have Printed my Experience to satisfy the World are mistaken; for it is such a one as can only truly satisfy Believers, and not all of them neither; for tho' a Believer is not a Pharisee, yet some Believers have so much of the Pharisee in them as pure Gospel Grace (let it be in Preaching, or Experience) will scarcely

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scarcely go down with them, and so I conclude.

I know there are Erratas in the Book; but they that find fault I, I suppose can, and I hope will mend them with their Pen; and there may be some Expressions that possibly had better been out then in; but my main design was to deliver my Mind and Experience plainly, to the understanding of the Reader, that it might answer the end proposed. And this, I think, is done, and, as it is, I leave it with the Lord and the Spirit, to shine upon his own Work, to bear Witness to it in the Hearts and Consciences of Men, and hereby to glorify the Father and the Son.

Joseph Taylor.

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(1)

EXPERIENCES IN CHILD-HOOD.

PART I.

I Had the Blessing of Religious Parents, who brought me up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord. My tender Mother endeavour'd early to instill the Principles of Religion into my Mind, by Catechising, Reading, and good Instructions all which were followed with earnest Prayers for my Conversion.

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I

Experiences in Childhood.

I found very early Proofs of a degenerate Nature ; and that I were, as the Psalmist speaks, *Estranged from the Womb and went a-bray speaking lies.* Bitter Fruit soon sprung from the evil Stock of my Corrupt Nature, which is the Fountain of all Sin, and the Root of all Bitterness.

I was early convinced, that I was Born in Sin, and that, except I was Born again, I could not enter into the Kingdom of God.

I had great impressions on my Mind, that it was a sad thing to remain Unconverted, believing, if I Died in that State, I should be miserable to Eternity.

I read Mr. *Janeway's* Token for Children, and became very desirous to be as some of them he gives a relation of ; and in many things I came very near them.

I heard some Sermons on *Gen. 6. 3.* wherein was taught, the day of Grace was shorter with the Children of Believing Parents than others, which caused a great concern in my Mind about my State, and great Fears, lest the Spirit should soon cease striving.

My Conscience was very tender, and the Law therein sensibly very early took the Throne, which forced me to take Sanctuary in the Works thereof.

Experiences in Childhood

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As I increased in Years, I increased in sinfull Practices, which were attended with such severe Rebukes within, that forced me to forbear what I knew was Sin, and to do what I knew to be my Duty, and then I should have Peace; but in a while I committed the same Evils and worse, and then I was wounded worse than before.

About 13 Years of Age (in a long Illness) I had such clear apprehensions of my miserable Estate, if I then had Died, that with most earnest Cries I entreated the Lord to spare me, promising that I would leave off every thing that was Evil and become very Holy.

I made many strict Covenants, and kept them for sometime, spending my vacant hours from School in Praying, Reading and Hearing Sermons, when others were at Play: But in a while all was forgotten again; and then I should be worse than before, and then in a while again I became very observing.

I have in Writing, an Account of many considerable Workings in my Mind, to Repent and Turn to God, from the Consideration of the Misery if I did not, and the Happiness if I did, which I called the strivings of the spirit of God in me: And also, many Covenants I then made, and I always fled

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Experiences in Child-hood.

to the performance of Duties for Peace, and in them I rested. Thus it was with me in my Child-hood.

The use I make of this, is, truly to lament and mourn over my Corrupt Nature : Also, the Sins of my Child-hood, and that I should, after such an Education, fall into such abominable transgressions. This aggravated *Manasseh's* Sin, and truly greatens mine in my Eyes, which I lament before the Lord.

I lament also that Ignorance the Children of Believing Parents generally labour under, for want of having Christ Preached to them under their Convictions, as their refuge to fly to, and their hopes to lay hold of. Duties as naturally quiet Conscience as Sin disquiets it ; and therefore so many become Pharisees, and in that Pharisaical strictness Rest : The Lord knows I speak not against Praying, Hearing, Mourning and Fasting ; but to take Rest and Satisfaction in these, is to make an Idol of them. Flee, O, Youth ! flee to Christ immediately for Righteousness and Strength ; draw near to him as a Sinner, and apply and lay hold of him as thy own. Say not this will be Presumption in such a Youth as you : If you die in your Youth without it, you are miserable. Say
not,

Experiences in Childhood.

Not, I have not Repentance enough: I will first leave off my Sins and become Penitent and Holy, and then I will adventure to apply Christ and his Merits as mine. This is the Stone at which so many stumble; but be assured, you will never find any real Sanctification, you will only have the counterfeit of Repentance, Faith and Holiness, until you lay hold of Christ: Believe first and then you will abound in all Holiness; for out of the Believer's Belly shall flow Rivers of Living Waters, whilst the Workers for Peace and Life shall be as the parched Wilderness.

Experiences taken for Conversion.

Experiences taken for Conversion.

PART II.

An Account of that Experience which I reckoned was true Conversion to God, and of the Peace, and Comfort, and exact walking that followed.

ABout fifteen Years of Age, I fell under greater Convictions than ever, of my miserable Condition, and with it a fixed Resolution to endeavour to get out of it, which was occasioned by three things.

1. Some Sermons I heard Preached from those words, *Acts 3. 19. Repent you therefore and be Converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, &c.* Wherein was shown the necessity of Repentance in order to Salvation; and wherein it did consist; which I was sensible I had not, and therefore became exceedingly concerned.

tion. Experiences taken for Conversion.

2. I received a Letter from my Brother, manifesting great Convictions and Terrours for his Sin, which much concerned me, knowing my case was the same with his.

3. I had very great Rebukes of Conscience for a particular thing I believed was evil, and yet often was overcome with it: I resolved therefore, to find out a way to prevent the doing of it any more; and the way I contrived, was to make a Covenant with God, that I would do so no more, and if I did he should damn me for ever, and I would look upon my self to be so: Accordingly I writ such a Covenant, and Subscribed my Name thereunto: Now, I concluded I should never be troubled with it any more; for I was sure I should not be such a foolish Creature to damn my Soul for such a thing as that; which I believed I should do, if ever I committed it more: But notwithstanding my assurance, the Devil prevailed so with me, that in about three weeks time I did commit it, and hereupon I fell into Despair, believing I should be Damned according to my Contract; and having not the least hope, I thought I would take a view of the place where I should lie, and the Torments I should endure to eternity: Therefore I did read in a little Book, giving

Pathetical Description of Hell, which put me into sore Amazement and very great Terrour, believing I should be as certainly Damned as the Devils themselves ; I knew not what to do, nor what course to take for ease ; I rent the Lease out of the Book, I writ this Covenant in, but that gave me no relief ; and thus, in a restless manner, I wearied out the Day.

When Night came, I went to Prayer for relief ; but whilst I was Praying unto the Lord for Mercy, I thought I heard him say to me, *No, thou Cursed wretch, there is no Pardon for thee ; there was a time when thou mightest have had Pardon, God, and Christ, and all the enjoyments of Heaven, but now the Time is past, the door of Mercy is shut, and thou art miserable for ever.* Then I cryed out in the bitterness of my Soul, *O ! How shall I do to bear this heavy Sentence ! How shall I bear the tormenting Flames of Hell for ever and ever !* I thought then the Devil would come and take me away, therefore I was afraid to go into Bed. I sate groaning in the dark, and cried out, *What a wretch am I ! that might have had God, Christ and Happiness, but have lost them all for a Sin.* O, that I could now have Christ to help me, how would it rejoyce my Heart ! But there is none for me :
For

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the Sentence is past upon me, as one past recovery.

The Trouble of my Soul arose so high, as I could not stay in that place, but I was forc'd out in the Yard, crying, *I was Damned, I was Damned*, which two Persons in the house hearing, came to know the matter, which I told them: One told me, she was glad to find it so; she hoped God was at work on my Soul in order to Conversion; the other told me, God was mercifull; if her Soul was in my Soul's stead, she would not question the Mercy of God. She ask'd me whether I would do so any more? I told her, no, not for a World; then she told me I need not concern my self, and she being an ancient Professor, I believed her, and my fears were allayed, the storm was over, and I went to rest.

Notwithstanding this I believed, I was not Converted, and therefore had no Rest. but sought after Salvation; and whilst I was seeking, by means of some Persons in the Family, I came to receive the Doctrine of general Redemption, whereby I understood that Christ Died for all Mankind, to purchase Salvation for them, on the condition of sincere Repentance, Faith and Holiness, in one word, of sincere Obedience

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to the whole revealed Will of God ; And also, to purchase Power and Ability to perform the same : Accordingly I believed I had this Power given me of God, whereby I might, or might not perform them.

And now I understood it to be my business in order to obtain the Favour of God and Eternal Life, to repent of all my Sins, to believe in Christ, and to walk Holily and Humbly all the Days of my Life.

Accordingly I set my self about it, and first inquired what was required of me in Scripture under the name of Repentance ; and I learned from the forementioned Sermons that Repentance did consist in (1.) A sight and sense of Sin. (2.) In Sorrow and Contrition for Sin. (3.) In Confession and Acknowledgement of Sin. And (4.) In leaving and forsaking of Sin. This I laboured after Night and Day, and in some time concluded I had obtained it.

I inquired what was required of me in Scripture under the name of Faith or Believing ; and that was to believe in the Record that God had given of his Son ; of his Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection , Ascension, Intercession, and Coming again to judge the World ; particularly, that he died for the whole World, as before-mentioned ;

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Experiences taken for Conversion. 11

And accordingly I believed all, as I understood, was required of me : I understood also, that it was not enough to believe these things, but I must shew forth the truth of this Faith by a holy Life and Conversation, which was the third thing required, as the condition of Pardon and Salvation, which I also Covenanted to do. Hereupon having now performed the Condition, I applyed the Promise. Now I laid hold of Christ (as I reckoned) and all his saving Benefits as mine. I now confessed and forsook my Sins ; and therefore God was faithfull and just to forgive me my Sins, according to 1 *John* 1. 9. for so (1.) I understood that Text. *I believed all that Christ had purchased now was mine.* He had obtained Pardon of Sin, and it was mine ; (4.) and thereupon I took comfort in that particular Text, *Eph.* 1. 7. He had obtained Peace and Reconciliation with God for every Repenting Sinner, therefore I applyed that Text to my self, *Eph.* 2. 13. *Ye who sometimes were afar off, are now made nigh by the Blood of Jesus.* In- He had obtained the Blessing and Privilege of Adoption, and that I applyed to my self from *John* 1. 12. And so I did all the Privileges merited by Christ for Believers.

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By this means I came by my Peace and Joy, wherein I abounded.

I rejoyced that I, who was a while ago a Stranger and a Foreigner, was now a fellow-Citizen of the Saints, and of the Household of God.

And that the very Ground and Spring of my Comfort may appear, I will Transcribe in brief the Answer I find among my writings to this Question I then put to my self.

Quest. Have I Embraced the great Salvation?

Ans. If I have, then I have given up myself in Obedience to the Author of it: To which I say, *Lord is it not so?* Not that I Merit Salvation by so doing, for Christ hath Merited it by his Blood; but it is the term on which he offered this Merited Salvation, which if a Man comes not up to, he shall be Damned. I Obey thee therefore, because I love thee, and because it is the Terms on which thou dost offer thy Salvation.

By this it plainly appears the ground of my Comfort was the apprehension I had that I had so improv'd the Grace God had given me, as to perform those things required of me, as the Terms and Conditions of the Pardon of my Sins, and of my present Reception into his Favour.

Th

Experiences taken for Conversion. 13

The next followeth, *An Account of my succeeding Experience, and Walking for some Years.*

Having this Experience, I sought to know the whole Will of God, that I might do it: And I find in writing this Account, how it was with me, immediately after Church-Communion; which is as followeth.

Here I abode in this School of Christ, hearing his Word with Joy and Gladness, my Soul Hungred and Thirsted after it, more than my daily Food: Yea, I may truly say, *I prized it above Gold; yea than fine Gold*; it was sweeter to me than the *Honey and the Honey Comb*; I fed upon the Word, and always valued my Duties, according as I found my Spirit raised, and Heart carried into Heaven in the performance of them. Then I delighted in Prayer, for I seldom went to that Duty, but I came away with full assurance of the Love of God, with a Heart fill'd with Comfort. These were the days of my Espousals, and the Love of God constrained me to Love him again.

The next thing I find, is an improvement of Sermons, especially for Examination, that so I might not be deceived in my own case: to do which I arose early in the Morning, and redeemed time from Sleep. My man-

4 Experiences taken for Conversion.

per was to propound the Question to my Soul, and demand an Answer upon serious Consideration, and to write them both; many of which I have now by me, and will transcribe some.

The first Sermon I improved thus, was on *1 Per. 1. 10. Give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.*

Qu. How may I do to make my Calling and Election sure?

Answ. Then I have believed from a Judgment informed, the Record which God hath given of his Son Jesus Christ.

2. Then this faith hath wrought by Love, these I answer with satisfaction to my self.

Qu. 3. Hath this laid a Foundation of Engagement in my Soul to come to God thro' Christ?

Answ. My Conscience, or the Spirit of God, gives in Answer, and saith, *It is from hence that all those wonderfull Joys and Pleasures flow as I receive.* For of my self I am undone; and for my Iniquities, Hell, Wrath, Ruine, and Destruction is my Portion; and were it not for that Blessed Jesus, in whom I Believe, I must, as God is just, bear it for ever: Who hath come down from Heaven on Earth, and did bear all was due to us to bear, and so hath redeemed

Experiences taken for Conversion. 15

deemed us from it, upon our Repenting and Believing. And this hath laid a Foundation of Encouragement in my Soul to come to God through Christ, knowing that he is, without Christ, a consuming Fire; but in, and through him, he is a tender hearted Father: Therefore, when I go to my God in Prayer, I cry, with the help of the Spirit, *Abba Father*, and claim, with an humble boldness, all those precious Merits of the Blood of his eternal Son, the Lord Jesus: Therefore I may, in some good measure, conclude I have been truly Called.

Qu. Hath the Preaching of the Gospel made a change in my Heart?

Ans. Now my Conscience, what sayest thou? Speak and tell me, as it is? And From the bottom of my Heart. I speak, and, Lord, thou see'st me now at this present; behold I am turned, I am turned; there is a Blessed Change wrought in my Heart; that which I was, that am I not, and that which now I am, that were I not.

I hate to hear the Holy Name of my God profaned. I cannot abide wicked Company, tho' they be my own Brethren. Lord, cannot I say, and that in sincerity, That my Affections, my Desires, and my whole Soul runs out after thee, and

16 Experiences taken for Conversion.

Law only. O, how am I delighted, when I do get within the Veil, and see part of those Joys which thou hast prepared for me. What Peace of Conscience have I? And how are the Fruits of the Spirit evidently manifest in my Soul, which is Love, Joy, Peace, long-Suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, that is at some-times; but some-times, when I have much Business, and am not so much in private with God, then I am otherwise; which causeth me to cry out with *Paul, O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Death!*

The next Text I improved after this manner, was *Heb. 2. 3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvations.* Where the Question propounded is,

Q. How shall I do to know whether I have received and embraced this great Salvation.

A. If I have, I shall prize the Author of it.

Ans. What is it, O, my Conscience, as I account better? What is it as I love more? What is it as the Desire of my Soul most goeth out after? Lord I appeal to thee, what do I love better than thee, and thy ways? Is it Riches? No. Is it Pleasures? No. For through Rich Grace, I take pleasure in nothing but doing thy Will; I take pleasure to be among thy Children, and
talking

Experiences taken for Conversion. 17

talking with them, and to be examining of my self, and in performing Heavenly Duties; other Pleasures I esteem not. Lord, I love nothing, thou knowest, more than thee.

2. If I have embraced this Salvation, then I find more Power and Strength against my Corruptions.

3. I labour to hold fast that which I have.

4. I give my self up in Obedience to the Author of it.

5. Then I can trample on this World.

6. I shall long for the great Day of this Salvation. All which I answered with great satisfaction to my own Heart.

The Third Text I improved after this manner, is *Prov. 4. 23. Keep thy Heart with all Diligence, for out of it are the Issues of Life.*

Qu. How shall I do to know whether my Heart is upright before God?

1. Then my Heart is humble before him.

2. Then I am often mourning in the sense of Sin.

3. Then I rejoyce over Sin as dying and decaying in me. These Questions are all Answered with full satisfaction; I will write one or two following.

18 Experiences taken for Conversion.

Qn. If my Heart is upright before God, then do I as truly mourn for secret Sins, as for open ones?

Answ. This I can truly say, one is as bad to me as the other; for the Lord knows all, all things are naked before him. I do as much abhor my self for secret, as for open Sins; and, indeed, most of my Sins are secret ones; and therefore, if there be any mourning, it is for them.

Qn. Then do I long and desire after Communion with God in every Duty.

Answ. I cannot be satisfied with the bare performance of the Duty, but with the injoying of God in the Duty; for I live not upon my Duties * but upon
** That is, upon frames. This I called God in Duties.* God in Duties. I live in the Life of my Duty, and if I injoy not God in them, my Duties are not satisfactory to my Soul.

Qn. If my Heart is upright, it is a jealous Heart?

Answ. I am jealous of my self, lest I should not be upright before the Lord; and therefore it is, I search and examine. This causes me to cry out with David, Lord make my Heart sound in thy Statutes. This is that which causes so many fears in my Soul. I am jealous over my Heart, therefore

Experiences taken for Conversion. 19

Pray Lord, search me, and try me, and see if there be any evil way in me.

Qu. Then the end of all my Actions are the Glory of God?

Ans. The end of my Religious Actions are so; and my evil ones I Covenant against.

These were the Sermons as I loved; and I would not pass by any use of Examination, without comparing my Heart with the characters given: and the Preacher being of the same Principle with me, I met with none as I could not, with all satisfaction, answer. And by this means I was confirmed, that my Conversion to God was true and real.

The next thing I observe and find, is the manner of my walking all the Day long:

First, I find this Promise Recorded, viz. I will observe in what frame my Heart is in the Morning when I arise; and then about Nine a Clock I will stop and examine how it hath been with me; and also, to stop at Twelve, and then at Three, and then at Six a Clock, and then at Nine: that so all the Day my Heart may be kept close to God, and my Duty; and when I shall not Sin against him. I will keep a watch over my Tongue that I Sin not.

Experiences taken for Conversion

not; and over my Eyes, that they draw not my Heart away from God; that so it may every day be in Communion with God. For though my Hands be working here on Earth, yet, when I am alone my Heart may be in Heaven, my Thoughts my Affections, my Desires, and all may be there, that so I may walk in all, well-pleasing before the Lord.

I Spiritualized my temporal Business after the manner of Mr. Flavel's Husbandry Spiritualized; that so, whilst I was employed in my Business, my Heart might be meditating on Spiritual things.

Secondly, I recorded my Experiences either of more than ordinary Joy, or Trouble; and from recording of Experiences, now and then, I came to Record them every Day. And therefore, on September 10, 1682, I began a Diary, wherein I take notice of my Thoughts, Words and Actions, the Wandings of my Heart, the Joy, the Sorrow I met with, and every Frame of Spirit. And so exact, that no time past my Observation, nor scarcely any thing, from the time I awaked to the time I Slept, which brought me to a very great exactness; for what was amiss one day, I endeavoured to amend the next. I have looked over

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Experiences taken for Conversion, 23

se Diaries, and I shall give you a hint
v it was with me for several Years.

In the Year 1683, I find my Zeal be-
a to abate; I abated in that strictness
ore-mentioned, and left off my Diary;
this, my Conscience would finite me,
then I would get at it again; and taking
eculiar Acquaintance with a young Man
the same Principles, and such like Experi-
e as mine, I renewed my former exact-
s; and being the time of Persecution,
met together on the Lord's Days in the
orning to Pray, and Read, and Ex-
t one another to steadfastness in the
ay and Work of God, which I verily
ieve we did in all sincerity, according
our Knowledge and Principles.

In the Year 1684, the Persecution grow-
g more and more against the Dissenters,
rew the more Zealous, and the more
nger the more bold, accounting it an
nour to suffer for Christ; and this Year
was taken at a Meeting, and with 31
ore, was cast into New-Prison at Clerken-
ll-Green, where I had abundance of Joy
d Consolation, and made it my Business
encourage every one that came to see
; and I then thought, if I had been cal-
to it, I could have freely laid down
Life. I was here taken Sick, and did
think

think *I* should Die, but was very w
satisfied of the Love and Favour of G
towards me.

In the same Prison was Mr. Hanse
Knolls; who observing my diligence
Reading, Writing and Hearing, took p
culiar notice of me, and manifested abun
dance of Affection to me: He laboured
convince me of the Errour of general R
demption, and of Man being wholly Mo
tal; and to evidence to me that Singing
Psalms is a Gospel-Duty; but nothing w
effected but the last. He took me ofte
alone, and by being often with him, I
taught me how *I* should Expound the
Scriptures, by comparing Scripture wi
Scripture, and at last called me to take m
turn to Expound in Prison with several
thers; and after that to Preach; which be
ing Blessed the first time, caused him to
encourage me, so that *I* Preached every
Lord's Day in the Morning, whilst *I* re
mained there. *I* was here sixteen Weeks
and then was delivered; and the Perse
cution continuing, *I* Preached privately a
opportunity called me, to our own Con
gregation, and afterwards was called
forth by a Church-Act to Preach to the
and others.

find among other Experiences this;

February 1. 1684.

On that Evening, about eight of the
 clock, I was brought into the Lord's Ban-
 netting House, and his Banner over me
 of Love: I was then fallen into a Bles-
 sed Meditation, and the Spirit of God thus
 testified to me, That as sure as there is
 Water in the Sea, a Sun in the Firmament,
 Stars in the Heavens; as sure as there
 is a God in Heaven, so sure are my Sins
 washed away in the Blood of Christ, so sure
 am I his, and he, with all that in him is,
 is mine, and all that Glory and Riches as he
 has, is mine; *for thou art my Portion*, saith
 my Soul. And yet I cannot arrive at this,
 I know that eternal Glory shall be mine,
 because I cannot be assured I shall con-
 tinue faithful to the end.

In the Year 1685, I find the Evenness
 of my Walking much interrupted, which
 brought abundance of Trouble upon my
 Spirits: but yet, notwithstanding, I should,
 at particular times, enjoy such Comfort as
 I never formerly. I now gave my self a greater li-
 berty than formerly in my Garbe, in my
 discourse, and several other things I did,
 which I could not do formerly.

In

24 Experiences taken for Conversion

In the Year 1686, I came into the World and became incumbred with very considerable Business, which much took up Mind and Spirit, so that I could not keep up that strict Course as formerly: But this appeared not to me any thing but what might be attributed to the common Sins and Infirmities of the Children of God.

This is the account of that Experience then had; by reason of which I thought I was a Converted Person.

Enquiries concerning Condemnation

U S E.

The USE I shall make of it, shall be now to enquire, whether this is true and saving Conversion to God. I doubt not but many sincere Persons are in the same Case, and on the Account thereof, conclude all is well with them. I shall therefore deal faithfully, according to the Light, and Experience, the Lord hath given me: And in order hereunto, I shall premise two things.

1. That the Dealings of God with an Elect Soul, are, from first to last, very different from others.

2. I premise, that many Persons have had large Experience of things of this Nature; some before their Conversions, and some that never were Converted. I Repented, Mourned, and humbled my self, and so did *Ahab*, 2 Kings 22. 19. *Judas* Repented, *Mat.* 27. 3. And so did *Saul*. I believed, so did *Simon Magus*, *Acts* 8. 13. so did those, *John* 2. 23. 24. whom Christ would not trust, and I doubt not, but they had
D better

26 Enquiries concerning Conversion

better Notious then I, I reformed and became very strict, and so was *Saul*. touching the Law, blameless. *Phil. 3. 5.*

I was sincere and designed for Heaven so were the *Jews* that sought after Righteousness and yet obtained it not *Rom. 9. 33.* And so was *Paul* when a Pharisee.

I was Zealous for God, Christ his ways and Ordinances so were the *Jews*. *Rom. 10. 1.* I bear them record they have Zeal for God and yet he Laments their sad case so was *Saul*.

I had peace, comfort, and joy; so had the stony-ground Hearers where the word had no root, but in time of Temptation fell away as I also did.

I had delight and Pleasure in Duties Private and Publick, from the frames and Elevations of my mind, so had they that sought God dayly and delighted to know his ways, yea, delighted to approach to God. *Jesai. 58. 2.* And yet were unconverted and no doubt, those mentioned *Heb. 6. 4. 5.* had much more. There must be Something therefore beside these things, that must be the *Test* of Conversion.

Having

Enquiries concerning Conversion 27

Having premised these things I answer all this, in my judgment, is far short of true Conversion to God: And my Reason more Generally is, because, that which is true and saving, consists in a Conversion from *self* to Christ, and to God. Christ is the way to the Father; and therefore, there is no conversion to God; but in, and through Christ. He that Knows not the Son, is Ignorant of the Father: by the Son is the Knowledge of the Father: and yet knew not Jesus Christ: my Conversion was but from one part of *self* to another, from profane *self*, to Religious *self*, from a Publican, to a Pharisee. And our Lord tells us, that the first is the better of the two, or at least is nearer the Kingdom of Heaven. More Particularly, I believe it was not Conversion to God, for these Reasons.

1. Because I built upon a wrong Foundation; and if the Foundation be wrong, the Superstructure cannot be right. Christ was not the Foundation I Built upon, but my sincere Obedience: Now *other Foundation can no Man lay then that is laid, which is Christ Jesus* 1 Cor. 3, 11. If any build on this Foundation, wood, hay, stubble, though his Works shall be Burnt, he shall be saved, yet so as by fire: But if any Man build not upon Christ, as the Foundation and Chief Corner-stone, both the *Man* and

28 Enquiries concerning Conversion.

his *work* at the Great Day shall be *Burnt* together. The Foundation I built upon for my Justification, Peace, Adoption, and Eternall Life, (and which is the Foundation the General Principle lays its Builders upon) is plainly sincere Obedience to the whole revealed Will of God, *viz.* Repentance, Faith and Holiness; which are made the very Terms and Conditions of Pardon, Grace, and Favour, of Perseverance and Eternal Life; that therefore which such must necessarily build on for these Blessings, is the performance of these Conditions: Nothing can be more natural than this; if I am promised a thousand Pounds upon such Terms and Conditions (tho' such a promise should be purchased for me by another Person) what is it that I now must build upon for my thousand Pounds? It must necessarily be my performance of the Conditions. Now, this is not to build upon Christ, for to build upon Christ for these Blessings, is to build, or depend upon his perfect Obedience performed without us, *alone* for justification, as that wherein we stand justified *alone* before God, and *alone* upon that Habitual Grace, which is treasured up in him, to be Communicated by his Spirit for Sanctification; as that whereby we are *alone* renewed and Sanctified

Enquiries concerning Conversion. 29

stified, and made fit for Glory. Now, to build upon sincere Obedience for these, is to Renounce, to Reject, to Refuse, to Build upon Christ, His Righteousness and Fullness for it; for the one is directly opposed to the other, *Rom. 11. 6. If by Grace, then it is no more of Work; otherwise Grace is no more Grace; but if it be of Work, then it is no more Grace, otherwise Work is no more Work.* If Christ's Righteousness and Fullness is built upon, then not sincere Works; For then Grace is no more Grace.

If sincere Works are built upon, as the Conditions of these Blessings, then not Christ; for then Work is no more Work: But I was so blind as I saw not, whilst I built upon any thing else but Christ, I built not upon Christ, and that I did not build upon, that tried Stone, that corner-stone, that whosoever builds upon, shall never be confounded, is yet more plain; in that, I was ignorant of the way of God's Salvation by him.

1. I was ignorant of the Covenant of Grace, made with the Elect, in Christ, from Everlasting; in whom they are secured, as their Covenant-head, and by whom, from first to last, they are saved.

All the Covenant of Grace, as I knew, was, if I would become one of the Lord's People, he would, for Christ's sake, become

30 Enquiries concerning Conversion.

my God. I knew nothing of an eternal Covenant, made between the Father and the Son, for the Salvation of his Chosen.

Whosoever builds for Salvation, builds upon some Covenant or other; and it is either that made by the Father from everlasting with Christ and with us, as standing in him; the Terms whereof, are perfect Obedience to Law and Justice, which he performed in our Nature for us, on the account of which, all the Blessings are freely and absolutely given: Or else, it is upon a Covenant of Works made between God and their own Persons; the Conditions whereof are sincere Obedience, on the performance of which, all Covenant-Blessings are Communicated. The first is as stable as Heaven and Earth; it stands upon the basis of eternal Wisdom, Holiness and Justice; the other is as unstable as Water, depending upon the fickle, unconstant, Obedience of a fallen Creature, which is determined by his own free Will, a will so soon drawn away by Sin, Satan, and the World. And no other Covenant had I then to rest upon; whereas the Called of God have an everlasting Covenant to found their hopes upon, and can say with David, when dying, *He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; and this is all my Salvation;* 2 Sam. 23. 5.

Enquiries concerning Conversion 31

2. I was ignorant of God's Righteousness, *Rom. 10. 3.* I knew not there was a necessity to appear before God in an holy sinless Nature, and in a perfect, positive obedience to the precepts of the Law; and in a perfect and compleat satisfaction to the Justice of God, and all the demands of that very Law Man hath broken. I knew not that the Righteousness of God required it, or that Christ Jesus had such Righteousness for His to appear in, before the Holiness and Justice of God, wherein they stand compleat; and being ignorant of God's Righteousness, I went about to establish my own. *viz.* To seek Justification by my own sincere Righteousness, and so did not submit to the Righteousness of God.

And this is the worst of all Rebellion to rebel against, or refuse to submit to the way of God's Salvation by his Son's Righteousness, and in the stead thereof, to set up a way of Salvation and Righteousness of my own. Where the Heart is Converted, the Understanding is enlightned into, and the Will is bowed to submit to the way of God's Salvation by Christ. But in the midst of all my exactness, as my Mind was ignorant of, so my Will was set in direct opposition thereunto. And if a Man can be said to be Converted, whilst he is in open

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open Rebellion against God, and opposes the very way of his Salvation; I must have other thoughts of Conversion than now I have.

Sure I am, whosoever hath a powerfull Revelation of the spotless Righteousness of the Son of God for Justification, will throw down his own with Indignation, and count it but Löss, Dross and Dung, *that they may be found in him, not having on their own.* Phil. 3. 8.

3. I was ignorant of Christ as my Sanctification. The Doctrine I received would not suffer me to Believe, that Man was such a Poor, Blind, Filthy, Diseased, Leprous Creature as I now see him; not dead in Trespases and Sins, nor so Defiled and Corrupted by Nature, as many taught. I believed he had an understanding given him to know the Good and the Evil; and a liberty and freedom of Will to chuse the one and refuse the other; that he had a full Power to do what God required of him. I believed (if I was diligent and careful in the use of means to improve the Grace I had) I should have more; if I was not, that should be taken away which I had. Hereby you may see what I built on for Sanctification;

inquiries concerning Conversion 33

...; it was not the fullness of Christ,
my own conditional Obedience.

But had Christ been revealed with Power
to be my Sanctification, I should have
gone forth to him alone; I should have
rested in him, and rowled my Soul up-
on him; I should have known my San-
ctification did not depend on my doings,
but upon Union with Christ, and living
Influences from him, every Moment; That
the Covenant stands fast with him; and
because he lives, I shall live also.

4. It is evident, that is not Repen-
tance, Faith and Holiness, which I so cal-
led; that, on the performance of which, I
aimed the promised Blessing, proves not
the right kind. The principle and the
ground of my Repenting for, and turning from
sin, was wrong. True Mourning hath
ground for its Ground, and not for its End.
God's Love is the cause of Mourning, *Zach.*

2. 10. and therefore it is not to obtain it;
which it must be, if it be the condition
whereof. Faith empties the Soul of self-
righteousness and fullness, and leads it
on to Christ, but what I had led me to
my self, and from Christ. That which is
called justifying Faith, cannot be without
an Object that justifies; for there is no
such thing as believing nothing: To be-
lieve

Enquiries concerning Conversion

lieve nothing is not to believe: If then the Righteousness of Christ be that which justifies before God; where the Object is wanting the Faith is wanting; and I had no revelation of this Object, and therefore had not this Faith.

Hereupon it appears, all my Duties were no other than Pharisaical, and that, what I thought, was well-pleasing to God, and on the account of which, I pleaded the promises, and thought I was Converted, was an abomination before him, abhorred by him, and a stink in his Nostrils. For I put them in the room and stead of Christ Jesus, and his perfect Righteousness; than which, nothing can be more displeasing to God: For by natural Consequence, it turns Christ out of his Office, inverts the way of God's justifying a Sinner, gives occasion of boasting, lays a claim as a debt, and opposeth the grand design of God's justifying the Sinner, *viz.* the magnifying the Freeness of his Grace: And if so, what are all such performances but as the cutting off a Dog's Neck?

In a word then, unless a Man can be Converted to God, that is not Converted to the true Faith of Christ, that builds upon the Sand and not upon the Rock, that rests on a Covenant of Works, instead

Inquiries concerning Conversion 35

head of the Covenant of Grace ; that is not
only ignorant of, but submits not to, the
righteousness of Christ for Justification,
or his Grace and Spirit, for Sanctification:
That hath a Repentance from
wrong principle, and to a wrong end ;
that neither hath the Object of justifying
faith, nor the Spring and Root of good
works: I say, unless such a Man can be
said to be Converted to God, I was not
converted to him.

Experience

Experiences of the Power of Sin

P A R T III.

I Thought my Mountain strong and, that I should not be moved; the inward thoughts of my Heart were, that I should continue holy for ever. The Reasons I had for this, (I thought) were many; I had large Experience of the Peace and Comfort of an exact Life: I believed so; if I continued holy, I should be saved, if I fell away, I should Perish. I had likewise many Examples before my Eyes; I had many Cautions, Warnings and Exhortations; I exceedingly pressed others to Constancy and Perseverance, and as much pressed it upon my self; I considered the many and great Obligations I had to keep close to God; and therefore I could not think that above all Measures, I should forsake him. I remembered P

but I thought that reached not my Case.

My fair House was now to come down, and the Lord (for wise and just Reasons) took from me his Restraining Grace, and left me to conflict with my Corrupt Nature, and Satan's Temptations, in the strength of my own Principles; that so I might, by my own Experience, be convinced of the falsity of them: As if he should say, This poor Creature thinks he hath stood all this while by his own Care and Diligence; he boldly Preaches the liberty of the Will, to chuse the Good and refuse the Evil, to stand, or fall: Now I will leave him upon tryal, and let loose my Hand, and he shall find where he will be in a little time.

Being thus left, I was surprized with a temptation, which at first exceedingly startled me. I was troubled such an evil thought should so powerfully enter; but I was drawn on, first to look, and then to covet; and after many sollicitations in my mind, and many resistances, I at last, adventured in the way of Sin. For this, I was exceedingly troubled; that I, who knew there was such a Command, *as abstain from the appearance of evil*, 1 Thes. 5. 22. should run into the way of Evil; and I found no
E
peace

38 Experiences of the Power of Sin
peace untill I had solemnly confessed and
mourned over it.

I had now much Business on my hand,
whereby my exact course was interrupted,
and private Duties much hindred; and be-
ing occasionally in the way of Temptation,
I forgot my former Smart, and I adven-
tured again in the same way: Hereat
I was very much surprized, wondering what
was come to me, that I should do thus
again: But notwithstanding, when the
Trouble was over, I found my self as ready
to Sin as before; and finding the Case thus
with me, I resolved, upon making use of
the means of recovery (least it should grow
worse;) and therefore, I Read, Heard, and
Prayed to this end and purpose; but not-
withstanding, when a Temptation came,
tho' I strived, wrestled, and argued against
it, yet of a sudden, it overcame all resis-
tances, and carried me down the same
Stream. Then my Heart meditated terror,
then I began to despair of mercy; then
I knew not how to go and ask pardon
again for that evil which I had asked pa-
don so often for before, and promised and
covenanted, that I would commit no more.
But I knew no other way then to Repent
as the condition of my pardon; therefore
I sorrowed for my Sin, asked Pardon, and

Experiences of the Power of Sin. 39

promised to be careful for the future, and what I promised, I really designed; but in while, I should be overtaken again, and at last, I was so brought under the power of, as no Bonds, Civil, nor Religious could hold me; no Motives, or Arguments were powerful enough; neither the Terrours of Hell, nor Joys of Heaven, Threatnings, nor Promises, the Love of God, the Honour of his Name, the Credit of Religion, the Glory of Christ, and my own Salvation, all which I would argue with my self: and I added hereunto, Prayer and Fasting; yet, when a Temptation came with Power, they were no more than the Cords to *Sampson's* Strength. So that I was sensibly led about Captive by the Devil at his Will. And though my Terrours were unspeakable, yet I sinned in the face of them, and in the belief of the Wrath and Judgment of God due to me for my Sin, and that with a desperateness, saying, as those, *I have loved strangers, and after them will I go*, Jer. 2. 25. So Wicked, so Vile, so Abominable was I, no Tongue can express the Aggravations of my Sin before the Lord.

And hereupon, I often concluded, I was given up to vile Affections, and to a reprobate Sense, and was fallen into the condition of such, *who cannot cease from Sin*, 2

40 Experiences of the Power of Sin.

Pet. 2. 4. But then my Conscience awaking, with unspeakable Fury, caused me to believe, I was not yet given up. And, indeed, I had such Terror, Wrath, Confusion and Amazement, as is unexpressible, so that I have been ready to tear my Hair, pluck of my Flesh, and make an end of my self, all which wrought no Humiliation; but because I cannot better describe my Condition, than when I wrote in the agony of my Soul, I shall transcribe somewhat of what I then wrote.

Oct. 14. 1688. Terrours of Conscience.

BEing mightily concerned about my sad Case, I fate up the greatest part of a Night, and in the distress of my Soul, I took my Pen, and writ in Characters as followeth

Words are the Indications of the Mind, and what I write, is but as a Rivulet to the Ocean, or as a finall Branch to the Root; O, cursed Occasion, of this writing, I can truly with as *Job, Chap. 1. Let the Day perish wherein I was Born, and the Night, in which it was said a Man-Child is Conceived: Let that day be Darknes; let not God regard it from above,*
neither

Terrours of Conscience.

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either let the *Light* shine upon it; let darkness and the shadow of *Death* stain it, let a cloud dwell upon it, let the blackness of the day terrifie it; as for that *Night*, let darkness seize upon it, let it not be joyned to the days of the Year, &c. Or rather that Day wherein I first departed from God; O, cursed day to me! or rather cursed Evil. O! that I had died a little before that day. O! that my days had been cut off, and I had been rotten in the Grave at that time, as I turned my Feet out of God's Commandments, then had I been well, and my Soul had been safe. O! that I had been made some other Creature, some Dog, Toad, or Serpent, then had I served my Maker in my kind, and honoured him in my place, and had neither been rewarded by his Goodness, nor punished by his Hand; but to be made Man, and such a Man, O! that I had been in Heathen, or of the Cursed Race of *Cham*, then I had been Cursed but in Body, not in Soul, possibly I might not have known God, and so should not be required to honour him so much as now, or not knowing my Master's Will, I had been beaten but with few Stripes; But O! Miserable, Sad and Accursed, to be made a Man, born in Christendom, in *England*, yea, in *London*, in a Godly and Religious Family, of

E 3 Godly

Godly Parents, to have an informed Judgment, to be enlightned into Truth, to know as much as is really necessary to Salvation, yea, to have more than is necessary, more than thousands that sincerely follow God and are Saved; more than this, to be known of God, to have been enlightned, and tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and to be made partaker of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, and then to fall away, O! cursed State, O! miserable Condition, to begin in the Spirit, and end in the Flesh. O, wretched End! Once to love God, and Religion, and the Ways of God, now to love Sin and the Lusts of the Flesh; once to mourn for Sin, and now to rejoyce in it; once to do the things I hated, and now to love the things I do. O, miserable Change! Once to be a Servant of Righteousness, and made free from Sin, and now to be a Servant of Sin, and bound in Chains; once to be a Servant of the Living God, and Loved by him, and now to be a Servant to the vile Devil and hated by God. O Cursed Condition! Once to be led by the Motions of the Blessed Spirit of God, and be a Servant at his Will, and now to be led about by the accursed Devil, as a Captive at his Will: What

Sou

What Heart can endure
 What Soul so wicked, so devilish as I, cur-
 I, I, I, O, cursed wretched I! I am
 ready to gnaw my Tongue for Pain, and
 tear my Heart for Sorrow. What, once
 delight in Communion with God, and
 communion with the Saints, and now to
 afraid of him, and love Communion
 with wicked, abominable, accursed Wret-
 ches? Once to delight in Purity, and now
 Uncleannefs? O cursed Change! Once
 be in the Image of God, and now to
 have the Image of the foul ugly Devil Im-
 printed and Impressed on my Soul. O, ac-
 cursed Impression! Once to have Joy, De-
 light and Comfort, and now to have Ter-
 rour, Torment, Amazement, to be con-
 founded, and curse my self for my Folly,
 to be *Magor-Missabib*, a terrour to my
 self, as I daily am, to know that Sin is the
 way to Hell, to know it quenches the Spi-
 rit, confronts the Majesty of Heaven, that
 take away me Breath, that it kills and damns
 my Soul, gratifies the Devil, and every
 one hardens my Heart, sears my Consci-
 ence, and drives me to Eternal Flames,
 and yet to be a slave to it! O Cursed
 State! O wretched Slavery! O Cursed,
 Cursed, Cursed I! O! that I had never
 been Born, nor ever seen the Sun, to be Bap-
 tized

rized in Water, to die to Sin to Live to
 Righteousness, and now to Live to Sin,
 and Die to Righteousness, to be zealous
 for God, improving Time and Talents,
 growing in Grace, Faith, Love, Humility
 and Patience, and now fervently to follow
 Sin, losing Time, growing Hard, Dull,
 Dead, Proud and Impatient. O! that I
 had Tears of Blood to bewail it: Once
 to suffer for Christ in Prison, boldly to
 stand up for his Cause, truth and People.
 To fear the least Sin, to endeavour the
 greatest Good to Souls, taking pains Night
 and Day for their Conversion and Salva-
 tion; and now to be ashamed of Christ,
 to dishonour Christ, to commit Sin, with
 delight to ruin Souls; O miserable wretch-
 ed I! Once to Preach Christ, Conversion,
 Sanctification, and more than ordinary
 strictness in Piety; and now for me to
 build the things I destroyed; for me to
 Preach against such evils, and commit them.
 O, how inexcusable I am! And yet to be
 under the Power of them. O sad case!
 Once to be a holy and pious Example for
 others, a Light in the World, Salt in the
 Earth, and now to have this Light put
 out into a Stink, and this Salt to lose its
 flavour, O how am I become hence forth
 good.

Terrours of Conscience. 45

d for nothing, but to be trodden under
t of Men, and cast upon the Dung-hill.
To have Light and Knowledge against
Evil. To have checks of Conscience
inst the Evil. To have Resolutions and
mbats against the Evil. For it to be
great and hainous Evil ; an Evil so di-
tly against Holiness, and the Spirit of
liness, directly against many posi-
e Laws and commands , to be an Evil
inst the very Law and Light of Nature,
well as against the Scripture , the Law
Moses, and the Gospel of Christ ; and
not to be able to stand against this
l. O Cursed State ! O Miserable Con-
tion ! Once to be in the Love and Fa-
r of God, to have frequent Visits from
n, to have Communion with him, and
mmunications from him, to have Hope
Affurance. If then I had Died , I
uld have Heaven, and now to be ab-
red of God, to be far from God, to be
hout Hope , and without God in the
orld , to be assured if I now Die,
hall be Damned to Eternity. O dam-
d State ! O wretched Condition ! Once
have my Heart in Ordinances, and to
eive the Life and Comfort of Ordin-
ces , and now to have no Advantage,
Life, no Comfort, but to be a very
Hypocrite

Terroure of Conscience.

Hypocrite in Ordinances. O! What Heart can think? What Tongue can express? What Soul can conceive, of the miserable-ness of my Condition. O, the Guilt that lies upon my Soul! all the Sins committed before Conversion, whilst I stood with God; and now these Sins, with all their aggravations, they all lie upon me and then I am every day heaping up Wrath against the Day of Wrath. O Cursed State! O! the Grace that I have refused, the Mercy that I have abused, the Heaven that I have slighted, the God I have Disgraced and Dishonoured, and am for an accursed Soul-undoing self-destroying Sin. O! that I had felt the pains of Hell in my Soul. There is within me nothing but Darkness, Confusion, and a Sink of all Filthiness. There is every part Defiled: the Judgment, Affections, Memory, the Passions of Love, Joy, Hatred, Fear, they are all Defiled, Depraved, and become Unclean; all the Parts and Members of my Body are filthy and abominable: This Body, which was the Temple of the Holy Ghost, is now Defiled. O, dreadful Word! Him shall God Destroy.

And it is become an Habitation for the Devil, the strong Man Armed. My Members, which were Instruments of Righteousness

...s, are now become Instruments of Un-
 righteousness. Behold, all that I have
 become a Curse. I that once received
 Food and my Raiment with Joy and
 Comfort, as a Blessing from the Lord, I
 now have all as a Curse; and I have made
 use of those very Mercies, given to me by
 God, to Sin against him with. O, Cursed
 The Meat and Drink as I receive feeds
 me at an accursed Carcase! This is the Fruit
 of my Sin, and the Work of my Hands.

O! the many terrible Thunderbolts, which
 Scripture stand charged against me, *Prov.*

*1. He that being often reprov'd, and
 hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed,
 and that without remedy. Prov. 14. 14. The*

*backslider in Heart, shall be filled with his
 own ways. Heb. 10. 23. The just shall live
 by faith; but if any Man draw back, my Soul*

shall have no pleasure in him. Luke 9. 62.

*No Man having put his hand to the Plough
 and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of*

God. And 1 Cor. 6. 10. This is me. O, sad State!

What shall I do? O, Cursed, Cursed, I! O,

how shall I bear my Portion in Hell, with

Devils to all eternity!

Now this is my sad Estate, the dread-

fullest in the Earth; and that which makes

it worse, is, that notwithstanding all this,

I shall be ready to Sin again. O, abomi-

nable

nable slavery! And all this I can without Mourning, Heart-breaking, and shedding a Tear. I can Curse my self, I can wring my Hands, and gnash my Teeth for Pain; but my Heart is harder than a Stone. This Sin being committed against so good a God, a God so Gracious, Loving and Kind, scarcely moves me; but abusing his Kindness, the affronting His Majesty, brings me not into Tears; the ruining my own Soul do'n't melt, nor break me, vex me it doth, but not thaw my Icy Heart. O, wretched State! My Sin committed against my God, don't cause Tears to gush from me; trouble me it doth because of my wretched Condition.

To this I might add, what I writ in the same Book at another time, giving an account, what I had lost by my Sin, and what Miseries I had brought upon my self; and then crying out, O, wretched Sin, whereb I have lost God! I had better been flea'd alive, I had better flung my self into burning Fire, to have prevented this Sin, then to have thus done.

By all this, you may see the sad State of my Case: Here you may behold a poor Creature brought into such a sad Case, and all his Principles by no means could help him out of: For my Principles Preached

Endeavours after Deliverance 49

to me, either mercy on a sincere Repentance, which I had power to perform, or that I were judicially blinded and hardened, and could not Repent; and accordingly sometimes, I struck upon one Rock, and sometimes upon the other; sometimes I concluded I was given up, and God had said to me, as to *Ephraim*, *he is joyned to Idols, let him alone.* Hof. 4. 17.

But when I found such Conflicts of Soul, then I concluded, I was not given up; and, therefore had power from God, and by his assistance, I might Repent; and so I had no other way left but that, which I had set about so often, and failed in. However, I set about it again, hoping I might have better success then formerly my ends were.

1. To get true Repentance for my Iniquities.

2. Then to apply to the Blood of Christ, for my Pardon and Peace with God.

3. To reform and walk in all Holiness as formerly; in order hereunto,

1. I sought the Lord by Prayer continually.

2. In a Book I writ my Evil, with all its aggravations, that I might behold it and mourn answerably for it; and that when

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a Temptation came again, I might read therein, and prevent it hereby.

3. Hereunto, I added Fasting, and accordingly kept Days of Fast and Prayer by my self.

4. I attended the Ordinances with Prayer and great Observation, how my Heart was under them: When I had been in this Practice some considerable time, I found Meltings and Mournings again, at which I greatly rejoyced; I then applied to the Blood of Christ for Pardon, and believed all my former Iniquities were then pardoned; I rejoyced herein: And then,

5. I entred into a solemn Covenant with God, written with my own Hand, and Subscribed and Sealed in his Presence, applying now to my Soul all the promises of Grace and Pardon, made to returning Backsliders, *Jer.* 3. 5. *Hos.* 14. 1, 4. *Reb.* 3. 18. as I did before to Sinners at the first Repentance; and when all this was done, I had Peace and Rest, and walked on comfortably, hoping the bitterness of Death was past: but when a Temptation came and violently assaulted me, I have betaken my self to my Weapons, to Prayer, Striving, and Reading in my Book, which I always carried about me to the end. I have set before me Life and Death.

Blessing

Endeavours after Deliverance. 51

blessing, and Cursing, Heaven and Hell, the Sin, and the Aggravations thereof, what an Offence it would be to God, what a Ruine to me; I must never more expect Pardon nor Favour, nothing but a fearful looking for of Judgment; thus I have Combated for a time, and Resisted, and Opposed: But in the event, all these, with the solemn Covenant, with Hand and Seal annexed, have proved, but as before-mentioned, like the Cords to *Sampson's* strength, they have been all snapt in twain, and I became as bad as ever, which appears by my Diary, which I still kept on foot, at times, wherein are the distinct accounts of these sad things.

No misery, on this side Hell, can parallel this; I adore that infinite, unspeakable Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to give me deliverance; I would infinitely sooner chuse the Slavery of the Gallies, then be again in this slavery. O, ten thousand Worlds cannot equal such a Deliverance! O, the Power of Temptation! O, the Power of Sin, when God restrains it not! O, the Power of Christ! not only to restrain the power of Temptation, but to change the Heart and Nature of the sinner, to change such vile Affections, to knock off such Fetters, to unloose such

E 2 Chains,

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Chains, to open such Prison-Doors; Eternal praise be given to the Author of such a Salvation.

I might abound in accounts of this Nature, Repenting and Sinning, and Sinning and Repenting, but the amazing and incredible thing in my case, to most people, is the Experience I then had; Some of which I shall give a particular account of, as I find them Recorded in my Diary which I then kept; and shall also shew wherein they came short of *that Faith in Jesus Christ, which is of the Operation of God*, Col. 2. 12.

Experiences taken for true Faith and Repentance, and the Mistakes Discovered.

November 25.

After I had been at the Lord's Supper, I came home, went up Stairs with matters warm upon my Heart, resolving,
by

Grace received, to act those Graces now
I should more penliarly have acted
the time of the Sacrament. I therefore
read in Mr. Doolittle's Book of the Lord's
Supper, of the twenty Properties of the
Blood of Christ, and applied them one by
one severally unto my own Soul. I found
precious Blood to me, in making my vile
Soul, precious in God's Eye, which I did
never believe it was through this Blood, I
beheld it, as satisfying Blood for my Sins,
and did believe, that God did receive sa-
tisfaction by it, for my last Apostacy;
and for all my Sins. What said I! Did
it satisfy for these Evils? Yes, for them
I am satisfied, saith God to my Soul. Thus
I may look upon all those properties. Then
it shews how Faith is exercised in this
Ordinance, as it doth appeal to God, to
the Father, and my own Conscience. I did
not find the Devil, nor my own Consci-
ence peculiarly accuse me; therefore I did
appeal to God, in every property of this
Blood.

Then I went to Prayer unto the Lord,
and in Prayer, I first did see all my Vil-
lanies and Wickedness with open eye. I
beheld my wretchedness, with abhorrency
and hatred of my Sin and self; and first
confessed all my Sins with Mourning, with

24 True Faith and Repentance, &c.

fulness of Tears and Humility (O! Blessed
 be the Lord God of Heaven and Earth.) Then
 I came and said, Lord, I am a vile Crea-
 ture; but behold here is precious Blood,
 the Blood of Jesus Christ, to make me
 precious in thy sight. I had then the sense
 of it, as if God had answered, Yea so it
 doth. I behold thee precious through it,
 tho' never so vile in thy self; and I said,
Lord, thou dost behold sinners tho' never so
vile, precious through this Blood, and therefore
thou wilt so behold me I have offended thee
 by my Sin, my God; but behold, here is
 purifying Blood; it hath satisfied thee for
 my Sin. and I beheld God as satisfied
 through it, and by it unto me. Lord said
 I, I have procured Guilt by my Sin; but
 behold, here is Justifying and Sin-Pardon-
 ing Blood, shed for the Remission of my
 Sins, and thou dost justify and remit me
 through this Blood from all my Sins.
 Lord, I am a defiled Creature, filthy by
 reason of Sin; here is cleansing Blood.
 O! wash me in Christ's Blood; and thou
 art washing me, and wilt do so. Thus
 was I made able to apply every property
 of it to my own Soul. And now to close
 all, I do from this day Conclude, that the
 Lord hath, in his infinite Mercy, through
 the Lord Jesus Christ, pardoned all my
 Sins.

ins, forgiven all my Iniquities; is become reconciled to me, hath taken me into his favour, and made me his Son and Child, and Heir of Glory. O, wonderful, admirable Love! who can express it; I cannot think of it without astonishment. Then my Soul made a Covenant with the Lord God as before; and here I had most admiring Thoughts of God's consenting to become mine in a Covenant-way; and I cried out, *O Lord, what am I, to be given to thee.* I am thine, and I give my self Body, Soul and Spirit, and all I have and am unto thee, and I begged he would take care of me.

All this I did in the sincerity (for ought I know) of my Heart, and in the rejoycing of my Soul: But in a few days after this, my Mind was carried away to my accursed Sin again, and all this became as nothing.

Now, how like is this to those acts of Faith, which are true and saving, but the difference is very great.

The Difference lies not in Expression; true and saving acts of Faith may be expressed in these very Words, but it lies both in Doctrine and in Power.

56 true Faith and Repentance, &c.

1. In Notion or Doctrine ; I did not mean by these Expressions, and understand the same thing, as such do, who have true Faith, when they thus speak ; and now, when I express my self in these Terms, I mean quite another thing then I did then. As for Instance, when I say I beheld the Blood of Christ as satisfying for my Sin, and did believe the Justice of God was satisfied for them : I desire to be able to say no more now : for when I see this, I see all ; then I cannot but have an entire Rest and Trust in Christ Jesus, and in what he hath done, because that now I believe, whosoever Christ satisfied for, Justice must discharge, the Law must acquit, Righteousness must be accounted, the Heart must be Sanctified, and the Soul be saved. But I believed no such thing then ; I meant no more than that Christ made such a satisfaction for my Sin, as he did for the Damned ; that he so satisfied as to obtain mercy on the conditions of Repentance and Faith, which I reckoned then I was in the performance of, and therefore saw it precious and pacifying, and pardoning, as meriting that I should be so in the sight of God, on the forementioned Conditions ; whereby I was led to trust in them, and not in Christ alone, and so not at all : For a Man I be-
lieved

Experiences taken for

57

ved might be Damned, notwithstanding that Christ had done (and therefore that was not to be trusted to) but he that performed the Conditions, could not be damned, and therefore in them a Man was safe; so that which would have been a great act of Faith in one, that had believed Christ Died only for the Elect, and whosoever he satisfied for should be saved, was none in me, who believed he satisfied for the Sins of the Damned every whit as much as for mine. What a mighty act of Faith was it! For me to believe he satisfied for every Sin, when I believe he satisfied for the Sins of the whole World, viz. I believed he satisfied conditionally, which, indeed, is no satisfaction: But now for a person that is fully perswaded of the Doctrine of Election to be able to say, Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me, is a glorious act of Faith, and cannot be truly said without the Faith of the Operation of God; but in a Man that holds general Redemption, it is nothing at all: For this is a conclusion drawn from false premises; he hath Died for all, therefore for me: He that hath no other Faith and Trust in Christ, then that, will, I fear, be found on the last Day among the number of the unbelievers.

December

58 true Faith and Repentance, &c.

December 7. 1688.

I kept a Day of Fast and Prayer by myself, the Record of which, in my Diary is as followeth.

I first sat down and spake.

I am now come to keep a Day of Fast and Prayer unto the Lord for my great Sins and Iniquities which I have committed against him. I will go unto him and beg his Direction, and that he would help me in this great Work. Then I read *Nu. 9.* wherein is Recorded the Fast they kept and how great their Sins were; and yet notwithstanding the Lord was gracious ready to forgive, merciful, and slow to anger, and of great kindness; this did very much affect my Heart. After this, I approached his presence in Prayer, and therein found much Humility, much trouble of Soul, with great Tears and Cries unto the Lord. After I came from Prayer, I blessed the Lord for this Encouragement, and then it came into my Mind, that I would search out all mine Iniquities from my Youth up, and lay them before the Lord that I may Repent of them. Then I read my Sins committed in Child-hood, Youth, and so to this Day. Then I went

Prayer before the Lord in true Humi-
lity of Soul, as far as I am able to judge,
and Mourned, and Wept, and found broken-
ness of Heart and Spirit herein. I came
from Prayer, and read in my Book again,
wherein I recorded my Sins, and then, in
a little time, went to Prayer again; and
after that, I writ my last Sin with great
lamentation and trouble of Heart, desir-
ing I might have it more and more. Then
I went to Prayer before the Lord, to la-
ment this Sin, and here I found my Heart
hard, and dull, and heavy, that I could
not mourn upon this account so much as
the other: I found not such fluency of
expression, not so many Tears, and yet
more trouble of Heart upon this account:
then I came from that Prayer, and
was very much troubled and discourag-
ed because of the hardness of my Heart.
When I saw the effects of Sin, which was
to harden my Heart, and set my Soul a-
gainst God. I sat, for some time, in the
consideration of this, and was troubled;
when I concluded what farther to do, and
it was put into my Mind to draw forth a
confession of Sin in writing from my Child-
hood to this Day; accordingly I began in
the Words of *Daniel* Chap. 9. and so re-
counted the Lord's Mercy and my Sins to-
gether

60 true Faith and Repentance, &c

gether from my Child-hood to this Day in three sheets of Paper which, when I had done, I read the Paper before the Lord with all Humiliation, and Abasement of Soul as I was able. I then prayed affectionately to the Lord; begged chiefly for pardon, which I pleaded through the Blood of Christ, and for the cleansing of my Soul from Sin, and for the utter extirpation of them out of my Heart, with the Lord's Favour, Mercy and Blessing. I then considered as this was a Day of Fast, for which I should make a Covenant with the Lord my God; which I did, and writ it, and then arose up, and spake some words unto the Lord, and prayed that I might be made able to keep this Covenant which I had made, viz. To put Iniquity far away, to keep all his Laws and Commandments, taking him for my God, and giving my self to him, to be his. Then I spake to the Lord the words which I had writ, and solemnly entered into Covenant with him, depending on his Strength and Help to keep it, without which I cannot, and then I did subscribe my Name thereunto. I ended the Day with solemn Prayer, keeping my Fast twenty four Hours.

I desire the actions of this Day may be looked over by such Persons who rest in their

their Repentance and Humiliations, I cannot accuse my self of. Insincerity in this; for it was a private Fast between God and my own Soul, to humble my self before him, that I might obtain his pardon and strength against Sin, and that I might live to his Glory: But all this was done in a legal Spirit. What here of Christ to break the Heart? here nothing of him expressed, but that I pleaded for pardon through his Blood, which, indeed, had been abundance, had it been right; But what was that plea? It was this; Lord, thy Son hath merited, that a penitent sinner shall be pardoned. Should I come, a penitent, humble, broken sinner; do I now plead the Blood of Christ; or my own Repentance? Most certainly I plead my own Repentance; the Blood of Christ in this plea, is made the stalking-horse to sincere Repentance.

See how I worked and toyled that Day. Mind but the Work I did from the Morning to the Evening, the Praying, the Confessing, the Searching out my Sin, the Writing, the Covenanting; all which I put in the place of Christ and his Righteousness; and therefore it was abominable in the sight of the Lord.

62 true Faith and Repentance, &c

One act of Faith in the Lord Jesus, has been infinitely more pleasing to God, and has drawn more from Christ, than a thousand Years of such Fasts before God.

This was working for Life, and not from it. Let none think I condemn such Duties, but the putting them in the place of Christ, and the performing of them, as the Conditions of the Divine Favour, and to obtain the Love of God thereby.

But what follows, appears more difficult to account for.

March 24. 1683.

I continued this Day in a holy Frame. I find daily hopes of God's Mercy through Christ; and that if I should now Die, he would pardon me on his account, because that I am become the Subject of his Promise, *Mat. 11. 28. I am weary and heavy laden with Guilt and Misery, and Filth and Hardness, and I do come to Christ believing that he can and will ease me; who ever comes to him, he will in no wise cast out* and I do really come from the bottom of any Soul.

He that believes shall be Saved; and I have inquired what Faith is, and according to the definition of it in Scripture.

I am not absolutely deceived, I do believe in Christ, in what he was, in what he did, and improve him and his Merits to God for my Pardon and Sanctification. Whereupon believing that I am Justified and shall be Sanctified; all as I question about, the little Humiliation, and Heart-breaking, the want of that bitter Weeping as Peter and David had.

March 19. 1681.

I cried to the Lord for Mercy for my Soul sincerely through Jesus Christ, repenting of my Sin that was the occasion of my Misery; and I cried out, O! This is my Sin, my Sin, the Hand of the Lord is against me for my Sin.

I applied my self continually to the Lord, through the Blood of Jesus Christ, and desired to find any hope that he would be merciful. O! I went to the Lord Jesus as a poor distressed Soul, under Wrath, under all the Wrath due to me for my Sin before Conversion, and since Conversion; and the sense of that Wrath was very great and terrible; and if this was so terrible, what must Hell be? What must eternal Wrath be? O! I see, I see my foolishness.

64 true Faith and Repentance, &c.

I then applied my self to God through Christ for Justification and Sanctification. I came as an impenitent wretch for Repentance, as a hardened wretch for softning, as an unbelieving wretch for Faith, rowing my Soul on Jesus Christ for all, and thus continued, not without some glimmering hopes, this Day.

April. 25. 168 $\frac{1}{2}$.

I arose in the Morning, and took my little Pocket-Book; and there read what I had formerly promised to do every Morning, viz. To read over my Covenant, and then I made a Covenant with the Blessed God, to be his for ever. I Dedicated as well as I could (I hope I was enabled, through Christ, to do it now, acceptably) my Affections to Love him above all, my Will to Obey him, my Desires to run after him, my Judgment to chuse him, &c.

I Dedicated my self to the Lord Jesus to be his Subject, and took him for my Lord and Master. I Dedicated my self to him as his Scholar, taking him to be my Prophet, renouncing all others. I Dedicated my self to be saved by him, and received him as my alone high Priest, to deliver me from the Wrath of God, from all Sin, to walk

to Cleanse me, to Sanctifie me, to make me
 holy, to Enlighten me, to Enliven me, to Draw
 me, to infuse a new Life and Nature into me;
 to make me grow in Grace and Holiness;
 when I prayed with some Heart and Life.
 I doubt not these Experiences will startle
 many serious Professors, as they have me.
 What can be said more by a Soul under
 the apprehensions of Wrath and Misery?
 And what Applications more proper than
 those mentioned *March 19.*

I do now apply to Jesus Christ as my Ri-
 ghteousness and Sanctification. I came as
 an impenitent wretch for Repentance, &c.
 But the Fly in the Pot of Oyntment, is,
 that I did all this as the Condition on
 my part, for the obtaining these Blessings;
 likewise, at this time I came to make a
 remove, but not out of self still. I came
 to believe that Repentance and Faith were
 treasured up in Christ; they were Gifts
 kept in store by him, and were not re-
 sident in us; but still they were promised
 upon Conditions of the Creature's per-
 forming, viz. a diligent and earnest seek-
 ing of them, in all the appointed Means.
 I also believed the Covenant of Grace
 consisted in a Covenant between God and
 men in their own persons; the Condi-
 tions whereof on God's part, is our Cove-
 nanting

66 **true Faith and Repentance,** &c.
nanting with him, *I will be your God*, that
is the Promise on God's part, *You shall*
be my People, that is the Promise on Man's
viz. *If you will take me, and resign your*
selves up to me, then I will take you and
give my self unto you. Therefore it is, that
every Day, almost, I Covenanted with
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy
Spirit, because I would be found doing
my part; and notwithstanding what I
say on *March 19*, I was not acquainted
with Christ, and his justifying Righteous-
ness, but I built upon self all this while;
for it is the same as that on *April 25. 89*,
where I Covenant with Christ, as my
Priest, to deliver me from Wrath, &c.
The which Covenant-acts of giving and
receiving, I performed, as the Condi-
tion on my part. I now fall down be-
fore the Lord Jesus in the same Language
I come as an impenitent wretch for Re-
pentance, as a hardened wretch, for sof-
tening, &c. rowling my Soul upon him for
all; but I came then full, and now I
am drawn empty: I came with my Con-
ditions and Terms, and now I am brought
to the Feet of Jesus without them, quite
stript of all. I come now, believing Christ
hath performed all the Conditions of the
Covenant of Grace, that all the Blessings
thereof

, that reof may be freely given without Con-
 shall tions; and until a Soul is brought to this,
 Man's will never come quite empty handed to
 your Jesus Christ; he will bring his Conditions
 and his Terms with him, and present them
 , that for his Pardon and Salvation; and rather
 with than fail of a Condition, he will make his com-
 Holy ing as a poor, miserable, hardned, impen-
 doine ditent Wretch to Christ for Righteous-
 at ness, Grace One. Though here let it be
 inted noted, *That no Man comes as Poor, and Na-*
 reous ed, and Empty to Jesus Christ for all (what-
 while ver he thinks of himself) whilst he comes
 8. 89. upon his Terms and Conditions. This shews
 s my the Deceit of the next, on March 24.
 &c. where I argue the goodness of my State,
 and because that I am become the Subject of
 ondis the Promise, *Mat. 11. 28.* Because I am
 be weary and heavy laden &c. and because I
 uage do believe he can, and will ease me: But
 Re self lies at the bottom of all still; for now I
 sofie reckoned Christ would pardon me, because
 2 for now I had come up to the Qualifications and
 ow Terms of being weary and heavy laden,
 Con and coming to him as such, Now, I could
 ough plead my coming to him as a weary and
 quite heavy laden Sinner. This I brought as the
 Christ Term, or Qualification of my acceptance:
 the But I am now brought to him as empty
 ting of all Qualifications, and of every thing
 erec

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as shall recommend me to him. I thought
that being weary and heavy laden, would
recommend me to him; for though I was
a wretched Sinner, yet I was a weary
and heavy laden one; yea, I was such a
Sinner, as believed in him for Rest, and
therefore he would not deny me. Thus
instead of trusting in Christ Nakedly and
Alone, I trusted in these Qualifications.
I depended upon my being weary, and
upon my believing; so that I made my
Acts the Object of my Faith and Trust;
and all this arises from that false Notion,
that whatsoever sort of Persons the Pro-
mises are made to, those things mention-
ed, are the Conditions and Terms of that
Promise: As because there are Promises of
Mercies made to such Persons who are weary
and heavy Laden, who are Thirsty, who
Repent, and Believe, and Obey the Com-
mandments of God; therefore these are the
Conditions and Terms of Mercy promi-
sed.

But are not the New Covenant-Promi-
ses made to the Unclean, the Vile, the
Stony Hearted, *Ezek. 36. 25, 26. Then will
I sprinkle clean Water upon you, &c.* Are
there not Promises made to the Blind, to
the Deaf, to the Lame, to the Dumb? And
will any Man infer from thence, that
Un-

My Faith and Repentance, &c. 67

Uncleanness, hardness of Heart, Ignorance and Obstinacy, are the Conditions and Terms of the Promise.

Obj. But is it not good arguing? I am the Subject of the Promise, and therefore the promised Blessing belongs to me, as *Isa.* 56. *Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed*; but I believe on him, therefore.

Ans. Yes: But there is a vast difference between arguing thus by way of Examination for my own Comfort, and presenting these things to God, as such that shall recommend me to him; and upon the account of which, to claim the Promise, the difference is great between saying to my self, the Lord hath promised, *that he that believes shall be Saved*; and, through infinite rich Grace, I find I do believe; and therefore I take comfort that I shall be saved; and between claiming Salvation of the Lord on the account of these qualifications, I may take comfort from a reflection on my Soul, finding that the Lord hath freely given me those New-Covenant Blessings of Faith, Repentance, and Holiness, a new Heart and a right Spirit, according to *Ezek.* 36. But I may not (yea, a new Heart will not) go to God with these for Pardon, Reconciliation, and Salvation. My Faith says hold of the free Promise made to the greatest

greatest and worst of Sinners; and as such I find, my Soul lead to Christ, resting and relying on him, held forth in the Promise as my Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. The Language of Faith is not, I am a weary, and a heavy laden Sinner, I am a Believing, and Repenting, and Sanctified Sinner, therefore pardon me. A Soul that is truly weary and heavy laden will not do so; but the Language of a Believing Soul is, *I am Poor, and Miserable, and Blind, and Naked; as such one, I come to receive freely of thee tried Gold that I may be Rich, white Raiment, that I may be clothed, and eye-salve, that I may see* Rev. 3. 17, 18. I desire every Soul therefore to take heed of this deceit of Satan.

May 6. 1689.

I began to have such thoughts as these That it must be Repentance that must be of value to me, and Faith, when I Die. And then I enquired what these were; and then I reflected on my Sins, and the vileness of them, Then I began to be humbled in my Eyes, as they were committed against a Great, and Blessed, and Holy, and Glorious God; against such Love, such Light, such Grace, and such Covenants.

These

True Faith and Repentance, &c. 71

These things came home upon my Spirit, I
repented, set home by the Holy Ghost: Then I
did mourn and grieve for these Sins, and
I hated them, and my self because of them,
and I lamented before the Lord, begging his
Pardon and Grace through Jesus Christ; so
that upon the whole, I do find, through the
Favour of God, that I did there act Repen-
tance, and then begged for mercy through
the Lord Jesus Christ, which I hope the
Lord will be pleased to grant.

Now, after all this, I began to have some
Influences in my Mind to the same Evil,
which I repelled with all the power I had,
treating, for the Lord's sake, that I might
receive help from him; and to that end I read
a Book of the Mortification of Sin, and
resolved, as the Lord should enable me, to
keep close to those Directions: And whilst
I was reading in my Book, and endeavour-
ing to mourn for Sin, and to mortifie it, e-
ven whilst I was at this Work with all the
Power I had, I was overcome in the midst
of it, and carried away with the Power and
Force of the strong Man Armed, and brought
under his slavery, as much as the most ig-
norant brutish Man on Earth, even such a
Dominion as all my Light, Reasonings,
Experiences, and Obligations against it,
were not able to resist.

After

After this manner I lived for some time as Exact, as Holy, and as Zealous for God as if I had not sinned, and then as much under the power of Sin as if I had no Experience, no Repentance, no Faith, no Knowledge; and then again, as Penitent, Watchful, and Cautious, as before.

I continued thus undiscovered with the Fire burning in my own Breast, till *February 169 $\frac{1}{4}$* , when by the Divine Providence, discovery of my Sins was made to some Persons, upon which, I again, in a more than ordinary manner, considered my Case, and the ruine that would necessarily ensue if I were not delivered. I sincerely therefore applied my self to the Throne of Grace, and cried for Repentance with the same Principles, and in the same manner as before: At present, I could not find such Mourning and Meltings as I believed I must have, or my Sins would not be Pardon'd, nor my Soul Saved, which very much affrighted me.

I received a very compassionate Letter from one who knew the Case, to which I returned a long Answer, the Copy of which I have not.

Under great concern of Mind, I went the next Lord's Day to hear Mr. *Mar. Mead*, who, in treating of Regeneration, offered to prove, That

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The Principle of Grace was infused into the Soul by the Spirit of God, in an instant. This being contrary to my Judgment, I heard with great attention, and it caused great strugglings in my Mind about it ; being very desirous to know whether it was true ; by reason I knew if it was so, it would give a turn to my Thoughts ; in the mean time, I pursued my grand Designs to obtain Repentance, and brokenness of Heart for sin. And on

March 10, 1694.

Being in my Closet, and meditating on my Sin, my Soul burst out in repenting tears, Mourning and Weeping for my sin, and apprehending a Divine influence upon me, I fell on my Knees, and there had an aw, and dread of God upon my spirit ; I confessed my Sin, and apprehended Mercy from God till I wept bitterly, and cried, Lord, thou did'st once give me the greatest Blessing of renewing Grace, and I lost it. The Prodigal Son came in my Mind. I am that spent that Portion, and now I starve and cry for Bread ; there is enough in my Father's House. I was directed to Jesus for this Sovereign Grace, apprehending it was free Grace, and that affected me,
H and

and free indeed it must needs be if I have any of it; for I am sold under Sin overcome, gone, and made miserable. gush'd out in mourning and rejoicing, that I had met with something like God again something like Jesus Christ again. O. Blessed, Blessed Jesus! and then took Pen in my Hand, and wrote this Letter to my Friend, following.

A LETTER.

Most dear Friend,

THIS is occasioned by wonderful goodness; I am made a prodigy of wonder, wonder for Sin, and a wonder of Grace. Grace hath met me this Evening and I cannot but let you know it, that you may Glorify the God of all Grace. O! Send up Praises, send Thanks; Glorify his Name; he makes me do it; I am now in the midst of it; I am swallowed up in Tears; but they are Tears of Joy, as well as Sorrow. O! I have, I have, Blessed his Name, found him, whom I have so long lost or rather he hath found me; his Sovereign Grace hath found me out, the Lord hath commanded to glorify the Sovereignty of his Grace and I am made the Blessed Object of it. O I hate, I hate myself, I abhor my accursed hateful Crimes, not because they have brought me to shame

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hame, but Dishonoured my God, wounded my
Jesus, Grieved his Spirit, and Troubled and
wounded you his People: God will forgive me,
O! do you. I am brought to his Foot confes-
sing, and begging Pardon; and, by his Grace, I
will lie at yours, and do the like. O! That
you were all three here, now I could do it with
Shame, Blushing, Weeping, and hearty Ac-
knowledgement: This is not what I expected;
if God ever appeared, I concluded it would be
long, the Terrors Dreadful, and the Way
Dark; but who can bind up his Bowels when
he will manifest them? And who shall shut his
merciful Hands when he will open them? 'Tis
Grace hath done it, and that is Sovereign, God
hath shewn me it is so: It is not I that have
done it, it is He, He hath not done it because I
have cried, prayed, and begged, and done more
than others; he at first discovered me, and that
was Grace, then I did not Repent, but added
Sin to Sin, and 'tis He hath followed me close
untill his Goodness hath overtaken me, and I am
amazed at it, and am wondering. I am sure
this is infinite Grace, for what I feel, is super-
natural, it is Love beyond Thought. O! Glo-
rifie him, Glorifie him, I shall live to Glori-
fie him. O! adore that Blood that can wash
out such stains, and pardon such Sins: This
is the Blood that I have trampled under
Foot, and this is the Jesus I have Crucified

afresh: My Soul is in Tears for this, but they are Blessed Tears, O! that I had more, more, more of them: He that hath begun this good Work will carry it on to the Day of Christ. My Heart out-runs my Pen, that makes me write, I fear, too ill to be read; I was loath to be long in writing lest the influence should be over.

The next Morning I added what follows.

I wrote this last Night under the immediate influence of that Spirit of Repentance and Joy that was poured forth upon me. The thought of enjoying God again, put me into a holy Extasy, I can no longer contain: But, I fear, this is only a calm before a storm, a token for Good at present, that when Deserition comes, I may look back and hope, and not finally despair. For think you not that God will break my Bones, and tear me like a Lion, and let me feel the dreadful effects of his Anger? howsoever, if he do kill me, I will trust in him.

The general Opinion of those which have read these Letters, I understand, is, that I wrote them purposely to deceive them; if I had so done, I would readily acknowledge it; but they were of the same kind as the forementioned Experiences, only with this difference,

that

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that I had been a long time without melt-
ings of Spirit, so that I feared I was given
up; I strove to Repent, and I could find no
Tears, no Meltings, and of a sudden I found
them; hereby I knew I was not given up,
that wherever these were, there was par-
don; I therefore was really surprized with
exceeding Joy, and cried out, Praise him,
Praise him. I had now found these melt-
ings of Heart; these were my Life, my Joy,
my Hope, my Trust; in these were my Con-
fidence, my Rest, my All: I Lived if
they Lived, I Died if they Died; I could
not but be convinced, that I had them not
for my Prayers, Cries and Tears, more than
others, because it was so sudden, therefore I
saw out of Sovereign Grace. Besides, I could
not but believe, that God had given over
many, whose Sins had not reached mine;
and such a Sovereignty I always allowed,
that God might wait longer on, and do
more for some than for others, so long as he
did enough for all: I also had a fit of An-
ger against my Sin; yea, I concluded the
sense of this Grace made me to hate and
abhor it, and my self also, for I wrote the
present Sentiments of my Mind: Indeed
these things I made my God, my Christ,
and in them I trusted, and therefore no
wonder they proved all as broken Reeds.

I really abounded in Tears, and was so affected at this return of Humility and Brokenness, as I could scarce write for wetting the Paper with them, for I wrote and wept, and wept and wrote.

An Account of the change of my Principles, and some after Experience.

Mr. Mead's Sermon run much in my Mind. The way of his Arguing suited my way of Reasoning, viz. If nothing can act before it is, then there can be no (Spiritual) Act, before there is (Spiritual) Life; and Life is instantaneous, the principle must be infused, and that in an instant, whenever it is. I could not deny, that the Scripture saith, *Men are Dead*, Eph. 2. 1. *Dead in Trespasses and Sins*; that they are said to be *Quickened, and made Alive, and raised from the Dead*. And for this there must be an instant: I could not but acknowledge, that Regeneration is called a Creation, *Ye are his workmanship Created in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 2. 10. And this is done in an instant. From hence I came to believe the insufficiency of all moral suasion in its self, and the Almighty Efficiency of the Spirit of God; that it was his work alone, to Convert, to Change, to Quicken and

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and Regenerate the Heart. And this was confirmed beyond all contradiction, by my own Experience, I was a present witness to that Truth; for I had long Experience, that no Arguments, no Persuasions, nor any Motives would do. I set before me Life and Death, Blessing and Cursing, Heaven in its Glory, Hell in its misery. I affrighted my Soul with the curses of the Law, with the Thunders of Mount Sinai. I called in the threatnings of the Word against the Disobedient, and the Promises thereof to the Obedient. I pressed upon my Soul the Obligation that lay upon me to abstain from Sin, from the Love of God, his Greatness and Glory, the dishonour my Sin would bring to his Name, the Wounds it would give the Blessed Jesus, his spirit, Cause, Interest and People, the Ruine and Destruction this would be to my Person, my Soul, Body and Family, Destruction in this World, and that which is to come; and this I did not only once, but again, and again. This I Wrote, this I Read, this I Prayed over; this I fasted with; with these Arguments in my Mind, I watched against my Sin, Conflicted, Fought and Wrestled against it. I used all these Arguments to change and turn my Affections from it; yet they were all infinitely too weak to do it.

it. I was not ignorant, I could do nothing of my self, without the assistance of the Spirit; but, at the same time, I believed he would not work irresistibly. I obeyed his Motions, and adhered to his Counsels, he would work, if I did not, he would depart, and not yield his assistance; and therefore, I prest these things, expecting the Spirits Assistance; but notwithstanding all these were too weak to resist the strength of my Sin; these were not strong enough to bind the strong Man Armed. I am therefore a Witness to this Truth, and bear my Testimony against the sufficiency of moral suasion, to change the Heart and destroy the Power of Sin.

Upon my reception of this Truth, the Doctrine of Election and final Perseverance necessarily followed: For since Regeneration is by the Alone Efficiency of the Spirit of God, and all are not Regenerated; then necessarily there must be some, whom, before all time, he resolved thus to work upon; and consequently they should infallibly be kept by the same Almighty Power, through Faith unto Salvation.

My former Experience being so distinct I could not but conclude I was then Converted; and having now received these

Principles

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inciples, I believed, though now I were
fully fallen, yet, that the Seed of Grace
remained under the Rubbish of my Cor-
ruption; and God would, in his own time,
use it to spring up again, though it was
winter now; and though there was neither
Fruit nor Leaves, yet the Root remained
alive, and the Sun of Righteousness would
use with healing under his Wings, and
use the Sap to spring up, and the Tree
that now appeared Dead, should not only
bear Leaves, but Fruit also.

I now believed also, that an Almighty
Arm must save me, and I must be pluck'd
out of a Brand out of the Fire, by the same
Power, as raised Christ from the Dead.

I came now to be convinced also, that
the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ mak-
ing up one perfect Righteousness, was ac-
tually imputed to a Believer, for his justifi-
cation before God; but at the same time,
I also believed, that it was imputed on
other Terms and Conditions of the Crea-
ture performing as before, only with this
Difference; before I believed the Creature
had power given him (which he might or
might not improve) to perform the Condi-
tions of this Justification and Acceptance
with God; and now I believed, that God
thought them by the Almighty Power of
his

his Spirit; by means of which I was still kept from Christ; for I thought I was not to apply Christ in the Promise as my Righteousness and Strength, until I found the Conditions, or Qualifications wrought in me. I could find Faith and the effects of it, then I might take Comfort and apply Christ, and all his Saving Benefits, but not till then which caused me to look into my self, where I should have first looked out to Christ. This is a very dangerous Doctrine; for it prevents Persons from coming as Sinners to Christ, and applying him as a Remedy in a very way suited to these Miseries. It prevents them from coming as *Poor, and Miserable, and Blind, and Naked*; for according thereunto, they must find they are rich, before they apply Christ as their Treasury. They must first know they are healed before they can trust in Christ as their Physician.

Thus I came into the middle way and stood (if such a thing is possible) between Truth and Error, half one, and half the other: one foot upon the Particular, and another upon the General Doctrine; one upon the Righteousness of Christ as it were, and another upon my own; and consequently this made but half work with me: I found an alteration but not a deliverance.

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the Truths I did believe, were not im-
pregnated with Life and Power: There was
such powerful influence attended them
now. I now see them in another Light;
and they are (through rich Grace) accom-
panied with another Power; and the Light
that had, was so mixed with Darknes, that I
saw nothing clear. What clear Notions
can a Man have of Election, that believes
in Reprobation? What clear Notions
can he have of God's imputing Righteous-
ness, without Works, whilst he believes
that God hath made Works the Condition of
that imputation? With what clearness can
that Man apprehend Grace to be a free
gift, whilst he believes he must do some-
thing to obtain it? How blindly doth that
Man understand the Covenant of Grace,
whilst he believes those things are the Con-
ditions of the Covenant, which are the
things promised in it? Such a kind of
light was mine, and no more. I say, not
that Christ Jesus may be revealed in his
righteousness and Fullness, and the Heart
made intirely to trust in him, where there
may not be very distinct Notions of ma-
ny things: And there may be some distinct
Notions of the Grace of God without the
Power of them; but I can't see, I had truly
said.

This

This Year our Pastor Died, and the Church chose me in his place: I considered my Case, and upon serious Examination I found my Repentance, my Humiliation and Anger against my Sin, and self, continue; and after abundance of Consideration, I looked upon my self the more obliged to take that Care upon me, supposing it was God called me to it; and that it would be for his Glory, and the Good, for whom I had a most intire Affection (and hope ever shall have a most compassionate remembrance of them before the Throne of Grace.) I now designed and intreated of the Lord, that I might be very Humble, Holy, Watchful, Careful and Diligent, and so began, and went on: But after sometime I was surprized again: and when I found that nothing would do, I grew Heartless, and Repented, and Sorrowed that I was in that Station, and heartily wished my self out of it, and had often thoughts of discovering my self; but these Reasons prevented it.

1. The common saying, That no Man is bound to accuse himself.

2. All that Dishonour and Reproach to the Name of God, and Religion, and all that Misery and Ruine to my Person and Family, as would come thereby.

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3. I knew not but the Lord might heal me privately, and then all had been well. I now went on as before, but increased in Light, and had the Experience following; with which I will conclude this sad and miserable Part of my Life.

1. I had exceeding great Horror and Error when the Power of Sin had prevailed, with Sorrow and Repentance.

2. I had strong Desires after Deliverance, and thereupon most earnest Cries to the Lord, intreating him to bring me to the greatest Shame, Poverty, and Misery, so he would sanctifie me.

3. I endeavoured, under this Misery, to apply to the Lord Jesus Christ both for Righteousness and Strength; being now convinced, if ever I should be saved it must be that way; but yet found not the Mortifying Power, nor Sanctifying Vertue of Christ's Blood particularly applied to me, when I directed others to the Blood of Christ as one for cleansing. There I have endeavoured to go my self, and I have thought I have come so far as the Woman with the bloody Issue, when she said, *May I but touch the hem of his Garment, and I shall be whole.* I knew if I could but put forth one act of True Faith I should be whole. This I have
I cried

cried for, and endeavoured to do with my whole Soul.

4. I have had a peculiar presence (as I thought) in publick Services, a mighty carrying forth of Spirit, a warmth of Affections, and zeal in Prayer and Preaching and other Services, which made them very pleasant; the which, with the former Experience did give me reason then to think the Seed yet remained; and I thought I could not be so with a Man that never had Grace.

Before I conclude this Part, I shall take notice of one Objection as I have met with and clear it; which is this, That it is impossible I should say more then I have done that I cannot profess more Repentance, more Humility, greater Faith, nor speak more of the Free, Rich, Sovereign Grace of God in Christ, then I have done; and therefore, I am not capable to receive true comfort in my own Spirit, neither give satisfaction to others without long long waiting; and many conclude it cannot be done to my Dying Moments.

Answ. Besides what is known abroad before, I have added much more, and it is no more than what I really experienced and which I did take for Repentance, Faith and Holiness, and can add abundantly more.

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are of the same kind, which I have in my
arys by me : And all this a Man may
(without formal Hypocrisy) and yet
ignorant of Christ, and the way of
d's freely justifying and saving a Sinner
him.

What is contained in that Letter, is no
more than what a Man that holds general
redemption according to his own Prin-
ciples may say; and when I wrote it, I
is no other : And what is more common
an for persons of as contrary Princi-
s, as Light and Darkness, to express
emselves in the same Words, and yet
can the direct contrary things?

So it is with the *Quakers*, they will make
Confession of Faith in the very same
ords and Syllables, but mean thereby
ngs directly opposite to what you mean
d intend.

So will the *Socinians*, *Arians*, *Eutychians*,
ich is evident by the Printed Confession
Faith of those that hold general Re-
mption, which was drawn up by *M.*
and was Signed by my self, and others,
no really believ'd the God-head and Man-
od of Christ : And when we came to
M.C. we found he denied both, and
drew up that Article wherein we made
Confession of Faith in Christ as God-Man :

He

He, and the rest of his Judgment, mean one thing by those Expressions, and mean another; yea, the direct contrary; for He denies, He was either of the Uncreated Nature of *God*, his Father, or, of the Created Nature of *Mary*, his Mother. Likewise those which hold general Redemption, and particular Election, shall express themselves in the same Words and Phrases but mean direct contrary things. The generals will tell you (as I have done many times) they believe that of themselves they can do nothing, not so much as speak a good Word, nor think a good Thought that they believe Man hath no power of himself, but it is all given him of God, and that freely, without any thing in the least done by the Creature to deserve it. They will tell you, when we have done all, we are unprofitable Servants; that we are justified by Christ alone, by his Merits alone, by his Righteousness alone, without Works and yet believe sincere Obedience is the Condition of it. They tell you they own the Sovereignty of God, that He doth what he will with his own, that he hath Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom He will, He hardeneth. That the Potter hath power over the Clay, to make one Vessel to Honour, and another to Dishonour.

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our, yea, that whom he did foreknow, them, he also did predestinate, &c. And at the same time speak sincerely; but they have quite different Meaning from such who believe the Doctrine of particular Election; when they express themselves in the same words. The Objection therefore is frivolous in it self, and deserves no Answer: And, indeed, appears to be framed by them, who (like *Jonah* in another case) are not willing to hear my Comfort is from Christ, and my conversion real, because they have professed to the contrary, but the Lord *will have mercy, on whom he will have mercy.* And *who hath resisted his will?* Rom. 9. 15. 19.

As for my Repentance, and Humiliation, it was not from a right Principle, and not a right End; it was not from an apprehension of a free Pardon through Christ, but to obtain it: The end was not to give glory to his Grace, but to obtain his Love, now, through Grace, I look upon him whom I have pierced, and mourn, *Zach.* 12. 10.

But the main Objection is, that I cannot speak more of the Free, Rich and Sovereign Grace of God in Christ. I Answer. There is a specifical difference between the apprehensions I have now of Free

and Sovereign Grace, and those I have then.

1. I then believed (as I have mentioned already) by vertue of his Sovereignty, he waited longer on some, than others: Some He cuts off in the Days of their Youth when their Sins neither for Nature, Number, nor Aggravation, reach others: On some he waits till gray Hairs, and gives longer time and space to Repent; and as He gives a longer Day, so He gives greater Means and Mercies; and so he did more for *Jerusalem*, for *Capernaum*, and *Bethsaida*, than for *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*: And he had done as much for them, as they would have Repented; and yet there was a sufficiency afforded them. Thus he doth more for those under the Gospel than for the Heathen that have it not and therefore their Damnation will be greater.

2. Now, I believe, that his Sovereignty (as is display'd in the Salvation or Damnation of Men) consists, in chusing from Eternity some, even out of the same lump, in His Son, to Salvation; and refusing others without respect had to the Good, or Evil of the Creature: No goodnes fore-seen in the Creature was any Motive, nor the vile Sins any Bar: This I call Sovereign Grace

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his I now adore and magnifie, and apprehending, I am one by the Experience of Faith and the Testimony of the Spirit; I stand amazed and astonished, and now cry out of Sovereign Grace under other apprehensions, and with other Thoughts, and Admirations then ever; which create another kind of Praise, Love, Sorrow for Sin and Obedience, than ever I before felt, or experienced.

3. Respecting the freeness of God's Love, I then believed it did consist in giving His Son freely, as a pure act of His Love to the World, to procure Salvation for Sinners, on the Terms and Conditions of sincere Obedience to what He required, and in giving them Ability to perform it; and I had a further thought, that he shew'd more kindness to some, than to others, in the case before-mentioned; and that, not because they were better than others, did more than others, or sinned less than others, but because he would: But then if they improved it not, their Damnation should be greater than others.

But I now believe, His Grace, which is manifested in Electing, Redeeming, Calling, Sanctifying, &c. is absolutely free, not only without Merit and Desert, but without Conditions; and I Adore, Magnify,

fy, Praise, and am overcome with it, and such:

As to my Experience since the change of my Principles, it is evident, notwithstanding I had far greater Light then I had before, yet I was not broken off from the Covenant of Works, but still remained under the Law; for I believed, Faith was required as a Qualification, or Condition, in order to the imputation of Christ's Righteousness to the Sinner: And to this end it was, as I cried for Faith, and Sanctification, to evidence that Faith, that so I might receive Christ and His Righteousness as mine, and until I had a sight of these qualifications; I thought it Presumption, to lay hold of Christ and take any Comfort from him.

I do acknowledge, that I was brought, as it were, near the Kingdom of Heaven; and I see it was the Lord's Pleasure I should be brought step by step; and I question not but he hath done it; that my Experience may be useful to discover the many false Rests, which poor Souls take up with, before they rest upon the Rock of Ages.

I was not yet *Dead to the Law by the Body of Christ*, according to *Rom. 7. 4.* but I yet Lived to the Law, and was Dead to Christ. To be alive to the Law; and to have

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we the Law, Our Husband, I understand, is to Obey its Precepts, either to avoid its Curse, or to obtain its Promise. Christ hath endured its Curse, and so hath delivered us from the Curse of the Law, Gal. 3. 13. He hath fulfilled its Precepts, and so hath obtained the Blessing. Thus are we Dead to all Obedience: For these ends and purposes, we Obey because we are Delivered, because we are Sons, and Free-men, and not to obtain freedom. The other are the Sons of the Bond-Woman who are to be cast out, to do any thing as a Condition then, to avoid Eternal Damnation, and to obtain Eternal Salvation, I think is Law; and to make this Gospel, is to turn the Gospel into Law, and the Covenant of Grace into a Covenant of Works. Now, I cried for Faith, that I might be delivered from the Curse of God, and have the Righteousness of Christ imputed to me. Hereby I conceive, I was yet under the Law, and Sin had Dominion over me: For let the Condition be what it will, provided it be a Condition to be performed by the Creature for the removing the Curse threatened, and to obtain the Blessing promised, it is a Covenant of Works: For it is not the Nature of the Condition that alters the Covenant, but its being either Conditional

tional, or absolute. If Conditional, it is a Covenant of Works; if absolute, it is a Covenant of Grace; and I was under the Power of the former, and not of the latter; and therefore in all this Experience I was not brought to Christ as no other else but a poor miserable Sinner; But took my Comfort from what I found within and not by a direct act of Faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since I wrote this Experience, I have met with several Passages in a Book of Mr John Simpson's in some Sermons, on Eph. 2, 8. 9. wherein he expresses my very Thoughts of such Experiences; and therefore I shall quote three. Pages 44. 98, 102

This is for the Reproof of the Hypocritical Protestant, who professeth the Doctrine of Justification by Faith without Works, with his Tongue but denieth it with his Heart; not daring to trust his Soul in the Arms of a Saviour, unless he brings good Works along with him to procure his Welcome and Entertainment.

This Man stumbles at the Threshold of the Door of Grace, being never able to enter into the House of Love, because he will not adventure his Salvation upon the Promises of Grace which are made to sinners that have no works or Righteousness inherently in themselves.

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will not go to God, or close with a promise of grace, unless he have the sight of Righteousness himself in the first place. He will tell you, that good Works are not the matter of our Justification, and yet he will not conclude that he is a justified Man, untill he see good Works in himself. This Man following the Law of Righteousness, doth not attain to the Law of Righteousness, because he seeketh it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the Law. Rom. 9. 31, 32.

The Apostle speaks against this Pharisaical opinion, when he saith, We are justified by grace through Believing; not through Working. I am not bound to love God, and the brethren, that I may be beloved of God: but I must believe, that I may love God and my Brother.

The preposterous Preaching of Sanctification before Justification, for the evidencing of justification, is that which keepeth many poor Creatures in Bondage for many Years, and ruines many Souls. How many are gone to Hell, who thought they were going to Heaven? deceiving themselves with false and unsound Assurances: and fetching their comforts from the sight of their own Works, and not from the Grace of God in Christ, by a pure act of Believing. If Grace were the right path to justification, we should be justified in Believing, but in Loving
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and Working. For I seeing my Love to God should conclude God's Love to me; But, here in is Love, not that we Loved God, but that God Loved us, and sent his Son to a Propitiation for our Sins, 1 John 4. 10. And true Love is wrought in us, by the sight of God's free Love to us in an act Believing.

Therefore if thou hast no assurance of the Love of God, but that which thou hast gotten from the sight of thine own Works, and from the conclusion of thine own base and deceitful Heart, as the ordinary way of some hath been thou hast no assurance at all.

When thou shalt lie under a great temptation, thou wilt find no comfort in this assurance: And thou shalt find at the great Day when thou shalt appear before God and Christ, that this assurance will not be worth a rush.

This building upon thy Love to God, and not upon God's free Love to thee, is to build upon a sandy Foundation, and not upon Christ by Faith. And if the Lord convince thee of thy Fault thou wilt lay a better Foundation of Joy and Comfort than this can be unto thee. For other Foundation can no Man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Cor. 3.

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Though a Spiritual Man can Make a good use of Marks and Signs, as of Love to God and Saints, when he seeth them in the Light of the Spirit, as Fruits proceeding from Faith, as the Root; yet by drawing a conclusion from the sight of such things, which we apprehend to be in our selves, of our Happiness and good Estate before God, we shall not so truly comfort, as certainly deceive our selves,

When God discovers his Grace to a Man for his justification, he shews him, that, as his evil Works cannot bring Damnation unto him; so his good Works cannot be available for his justification. That assurance of God's Love which some Professors have got, by the sight of their own Works, being never illuminated in their Understandings, to behold God's Grace in the Light and Beams of Grace; is not the true assurance of the Gospel, but the decei, and lying Divination of their own Spirits, concerning their own Happiness: For Salvation is by Faith without Works. God doth not require us to do good Works for Salvation in the Conscience, but doth positively and absolutely exclude them, as things which have no influence at all, upon that first assurance, which he doth give unto his People of his Love; which is by a pure, simple, unmix'd Act of Faith.

Experiences taken for

The Spirit of Grace is never given to comfort us, untill God hath stripped us of our own Righteousness, Works, and Performances, and hath brought us to the Throne of Grace, to be justified by free Grace, without any thing in our selves, that may make us fit for Justification, and Salvation.

A Man that truly believes, he sees not any Holiness, or Qualification in himself, that makes him more worthy of Salvation, than any other Man; he sees, that he hath deserved Damnation as well as any one who is now in the place of Torment; and yet, he sees, that such is the Grace, the unspeakable Grace of God to his poor Soul, that though he deserves to lie as low in Hell as Judas, for his Sin, yet he shall be raised as high as Heaven, by the Grace of the Father, made known to him, in Jesus Christ.

Brethren, if upon examination, you find that your Joy, Comfort and Assurance, have in the first place, proceeded from any Works, which you have in your selves, which make you conclude that you shall rather be saved than another Man, your assurance is not a right assurance: But if your assurance be right, it is by believing that which is reported concerning the Grace of God; that so, Salvation may be by Grace.

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It is possible for Men to deceive themselves, in obtaining an assurance of God's Love and their Happiness (therefore I will a little digress to open this to the ignorant.) It may be, thou takest comfort to thy self, by looking on Works wrought by thy self, and not by looking on Christ: It may be, thou conceivest, that thou lovest God, and from thence concludest that God loveth thee, though thou hast not seen his free Love to sinners; this is a bastardly assurance brought forth by thine own lying Spirit, and not the true assurance of the Spirit of Grace in Believing. In a true Assurance by Faith, God hath the Glory of his Grace. But in this kind of assurance God hath not the Glory of his Grace; therefore it is not a true assurance. Another deceiveth his Soul, and thinketh he is in a good Condition, because he resteth upon a Promise of God. Christ saith. Mat. 11. 8. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. A Man doth apprehend himself to be heavy laden, and from the sight of his Burthen, doth conclude he hath Rest, and is in a good Condition; but he deceiveth himself with a false persuasion; for the promise is not made to the qualification of weariness, but the Promise is made to the coming to Jesus Christ. Cain was heavy laden with his Sin, and lay so heavy on him, that he concluded the punishment was greater than he was able to bear, or that his Sin was greater then it could be for

given, and yet died miserable without mercy. We find that the sin of Judas lay so heavy on him, that he repented that he had shed innocent Blood, yet for all this, he went to his own place.

Therefore if thy comfort, and assurance, come from a sight of what is in thy self, and not from the discovery of Grace, as it is laid forth in the Spirit of Grace; thy assurance will not advantage thee in the Day of Wrath. Tho' God be convinced thee of sin, and there may be some legal Repentance and Reformation wrought in thee, and something which thou mayest miscall a true Love to God; thou canst not, from the sight of these things, rightly conclude, that thou art in the Love of God: before a discovery of free Love be made forth to thee a sinner: For God doth not apply his Grace, or his Son, to any Man for Justification, but through believing that Justification may evidently appear to the Sons of Men to be by his own Grace.

*shall now give An Account of my
present Experience.*

P A R T IV.

Have had many sad Thoughts what I should do, when my Sin was discovered, for I oftentimes concluded it would be (one time or another) and my conclusions were, I would fly from the presence of Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance; and I reckoned, I should soon find (when, by the temper of my Spirit, whether I were for utter Destruction, or not; and accordingly, I would act: But behold how the Wisdom and Goodness of God ordered and permitted things; for a little before this dismal Dispensation came upon me, I was drawn forth in a more than ordinary manner to bemoan my sad Case;

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and

And I went before the Lord in Prayer, and with abundance of Tears, lamented, that I should be such a slave and vassal to Sin and Satan; and I laid the Case before the Lord, and pleaded for a Deliverance with that earnestness, as was almost to an Agony, intreating, he would deliver me, *tho* he brought me to the greatest Shame, Poverty and Misery whatsoever: And as I was a rising from my Knees, that Text came very powerfully into my mind, *Jer. 31. 18. 20. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a Bullock unaccustomed to the Yoke: Turn thou me, and I shall be turned. Is Ephraim my dear Son? Is he a pleasant Child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him: For I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.*

From hence I had hopes and comfort, and said, Lord, dost thou hear me, a poor worthless Creature bemoaning himself. *O thou hast chastised me, and I have been chastised abundantly (though infinitely less than my Sins deserve) yet all those chastisements have not done the Work. It is thou must turn me, and I shall be turned; and then the last words were impress'd powerfully on my mind, Surely I will have mercy*

and that to Sin, e the with a A- thol Po as l came . 18. him- bal- Voke Eph For mem- able upon and wor O been y les y nalt It ; an- ower mere up
in him, saith the Lord. But I little thought the Lord was about to bring me into the wilderness, there to betroth me to himself. I well hope he hath, in Righteousness, and in Judgment, and in loving-Kindness, and in Mercy, according to *Hos.* 2. 19.) But soon after he allured me there by a way I thought not of. God now answered me by terrible things in Righteousness, and if I had denied it, I could not have taken more effect- all ways to have brought all that misery upon me which followed.

At first a Cloud appeared as big as a man's Hand, and it soon spread it self all over the Heavens. I had exasperated the *Armies* by a violent rent from them ; and into their Hands fell a new discovery of my Sin and Wickedness: I did not this, as they gave me, to escape their Dealings ; for I had not a little sense, as to think, that, a proper method ; but having hopes of Deliverance and Salvation from the last mentioned Experience, I did it from a real belief ; it was my Duty so to do, in that juncture of Affairs which then happened ; which are well known to some in this City.

Now the Lord gave me up to the Will and power of my Enemies ; they pursued and overtook me, and their Lusts were satisfied ; they rejoyced and triumphed over me, and
Blasphemed

Blasphemed the blessed Truths of God on my account: They said, Aha, aha, for would we have it. I wretchedly opened their Mouths to Blasphemy, or Spake evil of that peculiar, over-coming, all-conquering Grace which they must feel, or perish. Then was the Yoke of my Transgression bound by his Hand, they were wreathed, they came upon my Neck, he made my strength to fall. *The Lord delivered me into their hands, from whom I was not able to rise up, Lam. 1. 14.* I had thoughts of flying, but that Text came into my mind, *Whither shall I flee from thy Presence? Ps. 131 1.* And that, *Rejoyce not against me, O, mine Enemy! When I fall, I shall arise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me: I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned, Mich. 7. 8, 9.* With the last words a Resolution was begat, that I would stay, and bear my Shame and Misery, for my Sin. I went therefore before the Church, and desired I might speak before the Church *Alone*, with whom *Alone* I had there to do; but it was not granted; whereupon I might have justly, in the Judgment of many of themselves, refused; but I was desirous to bear the Indignation of the Lord. And as Sampson before the *Philistians*, so was I before them, while many of them acted their

arts with Glory and Triumph in that
agedy, in the view of a number of Stran-
s, which were never admitted to a
Church-Meeting before: And as their Eyes
were satisfied with seeing, so were the Ears
the rest with hearing; so that I might
ly say with the Church, *Lam. 1. 21.*
All mine Enemies have heard of my trouble;
they are glad that thou hast done it: : But
leave what follows, with the Lord.
Thou wilt bring the day that thou hast called,
and they shall be like unto me. Let all their
iniquities come before thee; and do thou un-
derstand them, as thou hast done unto me, for all my
transgressions: For my Sighs are many, and
my Heart is faint, v. 22.

My Friends that went away with me,
thought it their Duty to forsake me. My
lovers and friends stood aloof from my sore,
and my kinsmen stood afar off, *Pf. 38. 11.*
mournfully spake as Heman, *Lover and*
friend hast thou put far from me, Pf. 88. 18.
ea, I said with the Church, *Among all*
my lovers I had none to comfort me, Lam.
2. I cast many a languishing look after
my most intimate, near, and bosome Friends.
was in hopes that either Christianity, or
friendship, would oblige them to come and
give me one visit, to see whether I was for
Heaven or Hell, whether I Blasphemed, or

Re-

Repented ; but they stood afar off ; when I came by them, they turned away their Faces ; they shut their Doors, and refrain their Lips.

The Hands of violent Men laid hold on me also, and God delivered me up to the will of the Covetous-Man ; yea, they spake against me with a lying tongue, and compassed me about with words of hatred, *Psal. 109. 2, 3.* The Lord also stop'd the Brooks of Water, and dried up the Pools in a Land of Plenty, he made Scarcity, and among the Rivers he caused Drought ; he also built up against me, that which way soever I turned there was no passing ; so that I said, *He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out. He hath made my chain heavy, Lam. 3. 7.*

In this sore Distress, I began a-new to question my Conversion : I seriously examined, whether such a Dominion and Reign of Sin, as I was under, was consistent with a State of Grace, and I concluded it could not be, *Rom. 6. 12.* Then I inquired whether any Man might have such Experience and not be Converted, and I concluded he could not. Thus my mind lay in suspense. I opened my Case to some Ministers of my former acquaintance, who gave me their Judgment on my Case, that notwithstanding, such Experience they believed, I was never Converted.

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the same time I heard several Discourses from *Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.* and in some I came to this conclusion, that I was nearly Converted; and no sooner had I come to that conclusion in my own Breast, than all my Experience was but counterfeited, but I was filled with shame and confusion, all my hopes were dashed in pieces, fear and terror entered; for I depended on it as an undoubted thing, that I was truly Converted, and therefore should be saved; but now to find I was not, and nothing to trust to: I must seek as a Sinner, I must come as a Sinner, I must be Saved as a Sinner, or not at all. No language can express the strange alteration as made in my Heart, the Confusion, the Shame, the Fear that was upon me, that I should be so deceived this 19 Years; not only so, but the sad Condition I was now in the Gall of Bitterness, and Bond of Iniquity; and not barely so, but I had been doing nothing else all my Days, but heaping up of Wrath against the Day of Wrath. O! What vast heaps I had gathered up, heaps of Sin, and heaps of Judgments which were ready against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God. A sense fell upon me of the Infirmity of Man, and of the Holiness of God, and of the purity of the

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the Law, whereby Sin abounded. I conceived that his holy Eye looked upon my unclean Nature, Heart, Thoughts, Words and Actions, with the utmost abhorrence. He surprized me, and I entered into a debate with my own Soul, and I reasoned thus: If I never had Grace, I never shall; why should I think God will give me Grace now, after all these horrid Sins and dreadful Aggravations, and not give it me before, when I Prayed, Fasted, and Communicated to him so earnestly? I have more reason to expect that he will leave me still to my Idol, I have loved, and preferred before him, which I have set in his Throne, and set him at the foot of; what can such God provoking Sins expect, but that the Lord should give me up to these Gods whom I have provoked him, and say, behold your Gods, these are your Gods, receive now the Wages of your Unrighteousness and Abomination, I will give you over to be tormented with them, now, and to be tormented for them, to all Eternity.

Again, We have no instance in all the Scriptures of any who were recovered, of a likelihood of it, that had their Hearts Swept and garnished, and seven worse Devils entered, we read not of their being

ut again, nor of such recovered, who, being washed, did wallow in the Mire again.

Again, I Reasoned : It is fit, in the course of Divine Government, that such a wretch as I, whose Station and Sin is publicly known, should be an example of Judgment to deter others: For if God should have mercy upon me, and my Wounds should be healed, then others may venture, and make Encouragement; therefore to beget fear in them, it seems to be fit, I should be made an Example of Divine Vengeance: And this Argument so far prevailed, as I concluded this Dispensation was but the beginning of Wrath: Fire was just now set to the Stubble, and I should continue burning here a while in Despair, as *Spiral* and *Child* : and then I should fall into Eternal Burnings.

Besides, I reasoned with my self, that since I have been so deceived in my case already, I shall never be able to know when I am right. What kind of Experience must I expect, if this I have had is not of the right kind?

To all this was added, many dreadful Texts of Scripture, that sounded an Alarm of Wrath and Judgment in my Ears continually, as *He that being often reprov'd and hart-*

neth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed
 and that without remedy, Prov. 29. 1. Rom.
 2. 3. And thinkest thou this, O Man! that
 judgest them which do such things, and dost
 the same, that thou shalt escape the Judgment
 of God? With many more: And let any
 serious Christian think what a miserable
 Condition I was in, to have Wrath within
 out, and Wrath within, miserable abroad
 and miserable at home; above me, no
 thing but a Sin-revenging God; beneath me
 an eternal fiery Pit, ready to receive me
 behind me, a troop of the most horrid Sins
 pursuing me, and before me, a fearful look-
 ing for of Judgment to devour the Adver-
 sary: So that I said with the Church, Lam.
 1. 12. Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass
 by? behold and see, if there be any sorrow like
 to my sorrow, which is done unto me, where
 with the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day
 of his fierce anger. But those that passed by
 shook their Head at me, and all as I could
 hear of, from most of my former intimate
 Friends, was, that I must fall into Despair
 and lie there for a long Season. If there
 was any hope, it must come that way
 and I often said so too: But then, at other
 Seasons, I was caused to remember; This
 was to Sin against the Lord, this was to
 add a greater Sin than all the rest; this

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III

as to Crown all, and fill up the measure of my Iniquity; and if I were once fallen into the Pit, it was past all their will to get me out. I had felt the sad hardning effects of Horreur and Terror: I knew this work'd nothing but Wrath and Death, that this would not work Repentance, nor procure a Deliverance, but bind the Chains of misery upon me: And besides all this, I believed. I should then endeavour to end my miserable Life: And whenever I came to the conclusion, there is no hope; I left off all means, and my Heart began to be angry at God, and became resolved not to abide in this Shame and Misery: But I blessed the Name of the Lord for ever, that when I was just falling into the Pit, He said, *Deliver him, for I have found a ransom. In the midst of Judgment he remembered mercy:* And He left me a small Remnant, that shewed kindness to me, Prayed for me, and Laboured with me. O! that the Blessing of Him that dwelt in the Bush, may peculiarly be upon them; they saw the light, the fire burning and not consumed; they believed that God was in the Bush, and that He would have mercy on me, when I was unbelieving.

as I had also at Seasons such thoughts as these; how know I, but that God who answers

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swers by Terrible things in Righteousness, may do that by this dispensation which he hath not before? And this was the Reason of my standing and enduring all that Shame and Misery, which hath been more Terrible to me than a Publick Execution; for then, besides the Pity as is usual, I should have soon been out of it, but the Rage of incensed Friends is more cruel than Death.

In the midst of this misery I was led to seek out after Salvation, and I was first made to see the old way which I had tried so long, and so often, was an Abomination before God; and I came to this Resolution, that if there was no other way, then I must be Damned; for I was sure, I could never be saved that way. In the next place, I believed there was an Infinite fullness in Jesus Christ, there was enough in him I could come at it I Believed, in the Lord was Righteousness, and strength; Righteousness to Justifie, and strength, to Sanctifie, but I was never the better, if it were not there for me, and I thought I had little Reason to Expect it because of my horrid Provocations; but yet there was a may be, a peradventure I said, Who knows what Infinite Grace may do? I can but Perish; and if I do, desire to Perish at the foot of Christ applying for Righteousness, I likewise believed Grace

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Present Experiences.

was dispensed in a way of Sovereignty; and the thought, that the good of the Creature was no motive, nor his Evil, a bar to Gods dispensing his Grace, but that it was according to his own purpose and good pleasure; exceedingly at seasons revived me and put me in some hopes that possibly I might be one he had purposed to convert, and call home to himself, notwithstanding all my Abominations; but in a while I was overcome with the former Considerations, and had nothing but Misery and Destruction before me, I knew if I could believe I should be pardoned, sanctified, and Saved, but I could not believe: but in a Sense of my guilt and filth, apprehending I was Unpardoned and Unsanctified, I fell down before the Lord Jesus, and applied to him, as the most guilty, for Righteousness, knowing, if he became not my Righteousness, I must endure the greatest Wrath. I intreated with Cries and Prayers, that God would make him my Righteousness.

I fell before him also as a blind, harden'd, impenitent, Unbelieving Sinner for Eye-salve, Faith, Repentance and Holiness, knowing if ever I had it, I must have it from him, as the Fountain and treasury of Grace, and that as a free gift. I came as a poor, Dead branch in *Adam's* root to be cut off and vital-ly United to Christ the head of Righteous-

ness and Influence; and in this Condition I lay Sometimes in a little hopes it might be, and Sometimes concluding it never would be.

I Endeavoured to trust in, to apply and bring home Jesus Christ as made of God unto me, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; but I was no more able to do it, then to raise the Dead, I every day applied earnestly to the Lord Jesus and so have done innumerable times before, but I could not believe him, I knew and pleaded the promise; *whosoever comes to me, I will in no wise cast out. John 6. 37.* But I did not believe the Promise, nor give credit to the word of Christ; if I had given credit to what he there declares I should have trusted in him and rested upon him, but though I applied to him, for Righteousness and strength, yet I, Disbelieved him, I said indeed, Lord give it me, but often at the same time; believed he would not; And in this manner between hope and despair, and yet Sometimes fearing I should believe too soon and Sometimes fearing I should not believe at all, yet longing and desiring to put forth an act of saving Faith in the Lord Jesus, came to *Pinner's Hall* on *Tuesday February 1699*, and heard Mr. M. C. preach from these Words, *John. 16. 14. He shall glorify me*; two parts of which Sermon were made

ade use of by the Lord, to work the following effects, which for their excellency and suitableness to such a Condition, I will transcribe, *viz.*

Do Desponding Souls, and Distrusters of Christ glorify him when they either question his Power, or suspect his Will, that think their Sins so great that they never shall be forgiven, or their Unworthiness such, as they shall never be accepted? What, is thy Sin greater than his Sufferings? Is thy Guilt of a deeper Dye than his Blood? Canst not thou believe the word of him, that it is impossible he should Lie? Art thou afraid to trust him with thy Soul, and with the concerns of it, whom God hath trusted with all the concerns of his Glory? What unworthy Reflections are these cast upon the Son of God? Thou call'st it Humility to stand at a distance from him, and Presumption for such a filthy Sinner to come near him. Whether should the Unclean go, but to the purifying Fountain of Christ's Blood? Whether should the Empty Soul go, but to him in whom dwells all Fullness? To whom should the Starved Creature go but to his Father, in whose House there is Bread enough and to spare? What dost thou, by such Arguings as these, make of thy Saviour? Hast thou any cause to doubt his readiness to do that

that which he came into the World to do.
To save Sinners, yea, the chiefest of them.

Again, in another part of his Sermon, *Glorify the Son of God by an intire trusting in him.* It is by this, that he accounts himself Glorified. Faith gives Glory to God; and our believing will give Glory to Christ: Own him therefore as our Saviour sent from God; trust in him as a Foundation laid by the Hand of Heaven. The Salvation of Sinners, is a work from whence an especial Glory accrues to Christ, and the neglect of him by unbelief as a Saviour, is that Sin which acts in direct opposition against the Design and Work of the Spirit, for the Spirit's Work is to glorify him; but unbelief, that despiseth him, and so robs him. Let me tell you, you cannot do a more pleasing Work, than to believe on him whom God hath sent. It is his delight to see a poor, self-convinced, perishing Creature throw himself in his Arms. Trust in his Mercy, and rowl on his Grace. This is that, which above all things, glorifies him. This is that which shews the greatest Thoughts we have concerning Christ, that we do account him Able, Faithful and Willing, that he is One mighty to save, that his Obedience hath perfectly satisfied Divine Justice, and his Righteousness can justify the most guilty Creature. The Language of Faith, is, I know,

in

whom I have believed, and he is able to
keep that which I have committed to him :
in this we own him as one sent from God,
and set to our Seals that he is true, and be-
lieve him a Person fit for that Undertak-

Now, shall not your Hearts be prevailed
upon, and overcome to give this Glory to
Christ ; for the Blessed Jesus accounts him-
self Honoured and Crowned, when such a
useful Creature as thou, trusteth in him ; when
such a vile Heart as thine admits him, and
call it any longer be a doubt whether
you yield ? Rather let this be thy Language,
and say it so.

That I have greatly offended Divine
Justice, and am not able to make the least
satisfaction, that I have contracted a Debt
of ten Thousand Talents, or more, towards
the discharge of which, I cannot contribute
one Mite : Be it so, that I am Loathsome,
Vile, yea, that I am in his sight, but a dead
Dog, a cursed Caitiff, a Devil, and in
some respects, worse. Be it so, that for all
this, I deserve to Die, and do expect no o-
ther, that every thing lies against me, the
Law curses me, Guilt pursues me, Con-
science terrifies me, Heaven frowns upon
me, Hell is open to receive me, that I lie
under a Burthen, that I know no more how
to

to endure, than how to remove, and feel
 load of Sin and Guilt, that doth even sin
 me to Hell: Suppose all this, I know, to
 whom I am called to believe I am told
 where to rowl my Burthen; I am directed
 one that can ease me of this weight, and to him
 therefore will I come with this load of Guilt
 and rowl this sinking Soul upon him. The
 Justice I have offended, he hath satisfied; the
 Law I have broken, he hath obeyed, the
 Curse I have deserved, he hath endured, the
 Debt I have contracted, he hath discharged,
 tho' I am a Dead Dog, and deserve not Child-
 rens Bread, yet I may have a Crumb; and
 therefore will venture all upon his Righte-
 ousness, his Grace, his Satisfaction for the
 full Remission of my numberless Sins, and
 the Eternal Salvation of this my immortal
 Soul. This is that whereby we bring Glory
 to Christ.

At the hearing of this, my Heart burned
 and glowed within me, and I went home
 and pondered these things in my Heart; I
 Prayed over them, and for a Blessing upon
 them. This Discourse answered all my Ob-
 jections. I was afraid the Lord Jesus would
 not save such a wretch as I. I had great-
 ly offended Divine Justice, indeed, and were
 not able to make the least satisfaction. I
 had contracted a Debt of Ten Thousand
 Talents.

ents, yea, Ten Thousand times Ten thousand. Well, be it so : Suppose all this so, O ! how Blessed was it, that there were hopes in such a case as that.

Again, I was often afraid to believe, least I should presume, least I should heal too soon, and take comfort before it is time.

But here was a blessed Answer, What worthy Reflections are these cast upon the Mercy of God ? Thou call'st it Humility to stand at a distance from him, and presumptuous for such a filthy Sinner to come near him, *whither should the unclean go ?* &c.

O, Blessed Doctrine ! Then I fell down before the Blessed Jesus, as a naked and empty Sinner, having nothing but Vileness and Guilt, seeing nothing in me but Blindness, Hardness, Death, Uncleanness, Envy, and heaps of Wrath, and strive as with a one to hrowl my Soul upon him, to love, and trust in him for Salvation, but I did do very little that Night. The next Morning I began to take hold of Christ, and of his Promise, and endeavoured to plead and make forth the Language of Faith, mentioned in the Sermon, *viz. The Justice I have desired, he hath satisfied, the Law I have broken, he hath obeyed, the Curse I have deserved, he hath endured,* &c. But as fast as I laid down, my Fingers were knock'd off with this Object on,

Objection, How can you, or any Man speak thus to God, unless you, or they, were full of Christ had Died for you, or them in particular? and if he did not Die for you, then your Plea is Presumption, and you carry Lie in your Right Hand. This Objection I writ down, and struggled with all the Day, and brought it to this conclusion. I am in every way an undone and miserable Creature. Is it not my business to receive him with all my Heart, under all those considerations, as he is set before a miserable Sinner, and to trust in him, as my Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption? Yea, further, am I not Exhorted, and Commanded to apply and bring this blood to my Soul? Am I not allowed to say, I find in my Heart an ability so to do, he hath Loved me, and given himself for me. Am I not allowed to put in the Plea of his Blood shed for me, his Obedience performed for me? Am I not allowed to lay a claim to this by Believing? Yea, I have something further to say; Christ hath declared, *Whoever comes he will in no wise cast out*; and *Man can come to him, but whom the Father draws*; therefore, whosoever comes, he Doeth for. Whatsoever I know, this I am sure, That he hath called me to come to him, and poor unclean Sinner for cleansing, as a poor

Guilt

Guiltily Sinner for Righteousness, as a poor hungry Sinner for Meat, and as a Poor, thirsty Soul, ready to perish for Drink: and truly I will come; there is none else can help me. All Salvation is in his hand; and the Master calleth me; truly I will go: and I will not Disbelieve him; for he saith, *Come unto me, &c. and I will give you rest,* Mat. 11. 28. He saith, *If any Man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.* And truly I am a perishing Sinner, I am a thirst, I will go; and I do not think he is a Liar, I believe he is a faithful and a compassionate Jesus; He hath set the mountain of his Blood open for the greatest sinners; and he hath excepted none, but bid all welcome, yea, he saith, he will not *break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax.* Then I will not stay untill I am better prepared, for the avenger of Blood is behind me; and if he meets me, he will slay me, I'll hasten therefore to the City of Refuge. Behold I come to thee, thou Saviour of Sinners! Thus I argued all the Day by my self; and when Night came, I found the sparks blown up, the bruised Reed was strengthened, and the smoking Flax flamed. That Text came to my mind with power, *determined to know nothing, save Jesus Christ, and him Crucified,* 1 Cor. 2. 2. That is, Je-
M ius

Jus Christ Crucified for me, or else what
 doth it avail to know him Crucified for an-
 other, and not for me? and I firmly believed
 he was Crucified and that for me. Then came
 that Text to my mind with the same power
Rom. 3. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a pro-
piation through Faith, in his Blood, I found a
 Faith raised in my Soul to look to the Blood
 of Christ shed on the Cross, as a propitiation
 for my Sins in particular. I am not able to
 express the apprehensions I then had of my
 own particular Interest in the Dying Love of
 the Lord Jesus, it was as near and as dear to
 me, as if he had Died for no body else, and
 then I began to argue, Hath Jesus Christ, in-
 deed, satisfied the Justice of God, and made
 an atonement for me? Then God is not an-
 gry with me; he cannot be appeased and an-
 gry also; then he is Reconciled, then he is at
 Peace with me; then he is my God, my Fa-
 ther; then all my Sins, tho' so vast, tho' so
 innumerable, tho' so horrid, tho' so aggra-
 vating, are pardoned and done away; then
 Christ is my God, and my Saviour; and I
 had a Question darted into my Mind, When
 was this done? Is it a thing done just now?
 Was God angry with me Yesterday? And is
 he Atoned, Appeased, and Reconciled to Day?
 No; the Atonement was made long ago.
 Justice was satisfied long ago, therefore God

as not now to be reconciled : Hereupon I
 as swallowed up in the Ocean of Electing
 love and Grace. O! that the Father should
 pitch his Heart upon such a Dead Dog, on
 such a stinking Carcase, on such a sink of
 sin, and Monument of Wickedness. O!
 that manner of Love is this. O! how am
 amazed, that I should be one whom the
 Father gave to the Son by Name to Redeem,
 as if he should say, this wretch I give to thee,
 I will have him, I pitch my Love upon him,
 thou shalt undertake for him, notwithstanding
 he will be such a wicked Creature, it
 will gloryfie my Grace the more. O, the
 amazing Love of the Father! O, the asto-
 nishing Grace of the Son! as if I heard
 him say, I will undertake for him; I be-
 come his surety. I'll assume his Nature,
 and in his Law-place, obey and satisfie
 for him. O, infinite, unspeakable Love!
 O, the Love of the Lord the Spirit, as if he
 should say, I will bring him home after all
 his Abominations. I'll sprinkle the Blood
 of the Covenant upon him, and make him
 clean, I will wash him, and make him
 whiter than the Snow, &c. I will take of
 the things of Christ, and shew them unto
 him; I will reveal to him the Counsels of
 Grace, I'll make known to him the My-
 stery, the secrets of the Lord shall be with
 him.

him, I'll shew him the Covenant, I will give him an Eye to see all these things. And indeed, Faith was to me an Eye, whereby I saw those things I knew not before; and it is truly the evidence of things not seen. My seeing these things did not make them the more real; they were the same in themselves, but they were not discovered to me before. The Electing Love of the Father was the same, the undertaking of Christ, yea, his Nature, Obedience, and Satisfaction was the same, the Engagement of the Spirit was the same, my standing complete in the Person, Righteousness and satisfaction of Christ, was the same; but this was not revealed, applied, brought home, and made known to me.

O! what a discovery was now made of the fullness of Christ, and all that fullness opened to me: I believed, and do believe he is my Fullness, my Treasury, and my All. He is made of God unto me, even unto me. Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. I then said, in the Lord, have I Righteousness, and in the Lord have I Strength, I applied to him for all, believing I should have all; and I soon found the difference between applying to the Promise and believing the Promise; between applying to Christ by Prayer only, and applying by Faith.

Faith in Prayer. I thought it was Humility in me to say to my self, these Blessings are not for me, they are surely too great, too good, therefore I dare not presume to Pray, believing God will give them; I will inreat and cry, but I dare not expect them. I will not believe I shall have them. ^{St^d} Humility as this, the Lord hates: This is telling him to the Face he is a Lyar, and will not be faithful to his Word and Promise. Whatsoever you ask believing, you shall receive, and according to my Faith; yea, and above it; So I found.

1. I found there was in Christ, a perfect and compleat Righteousness, for me to stand in, before God; and I believed, I was compleat in Christ without Sin and Fault before God, as standing in him. Hereupon I triumphed in Christ, over Hell, Wrath, Satan, the Curse of the Law, my own Sinfulness, the World, and all the Miseries and Glories thereof.

2. I found habitual Grace sensibly communicated from Christ the Head and Fountain to my Soul: As,

1. The Gift of Faith. I, that a while ago could no more believe, than remove a Mountain, found Power and Ability wrought in my Heart to go forth (whilst I saw nothing in me but Guilt, Blindness, Hardness, Uncleaness

cleannels and Enmity against God) to the Lord Jesus Christ with Faith, and trust for Salvation. I not only applyed to him by Prayer, for that which my Soul was distressed for want of: But I was enabled to believe he was all, and would be all to me. *At I stood in need of: So that I said, The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, The Lord is my Righteousness and my Strength, the Lord is my Fountain and my Treasury; he is my San and my Shield, he is my Peace, Life and Joy, he is my Boast all the day long: And, in a word, He is my Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, he is my all in all.*

2. I found also, the Lord gave me Mourning and Sorrow for my Sin: For when I had seen him, whom I had pierced, I Mourned, *Zach. 12. 10.* When I saw I had Crucified my Lord, and my God, that he was my Covenant-Head, and Surety, that he stood in my Law-place, Obeyed in my room, and suffered the Curse in my stead; when I saw all my Sins laid upon him, and my Transgressions carried away by him; when I saw that my Sins pierced him on the Cross, and dishonoured him on the Throne, then I mourned, and do mourn, then God smote the Rock, and the Water gushed out. I had wept much before, but none like this; none so genuine, so free

full. I no sooner believed the Lord had
away my Sin, and caused it to pass over
me, to the Blessed Jesus, and that he
carried it away for ever, from the Eye
and View of God ; but my Soul grieved for
them. Indeed, when I saw the Lord pa-
sed towards me, then I *remembered, and*
was confounded and could not open my mouth
because of my shame, Ezek. 16. 63.

I have made a free and publick Confes-
sion of my Sins, with all their aggravations ;
and I never yet heard them aggravated by
those who are most incensed against me,
they are in my own mind ; and, I can
truly say, they are ever before me ; and
such a sense of them is continually with
me, as is consistent with the apprehension
of their being pardoned. Through infinite
Grace, I am not in Horrour, because I
see the Blood of Christ hath Atoned for
them : And though I will not make a lofty
pharisaical Confession, as if I were to Aton-
e for God, and obtain his Favour thereby, yet I
heartily acknowledge, and I am really
sensible, that the Nature, Number and Ag-
gravations of my Sins, are such as justly
make me the greatest of all Sinners : And
that there are such Circumstances in my Sin,
as I know no parallel ; on the account of
which I expected, there was no Mercy for
such

such a wretch : But infinite Grace hath prized me, and my Soul mourns before the Lord for that exceeding Dishonour and Reproach I have brought to the Name of the Lord. I am not unsensible how I have opened the Mouths of the Enemies of Christianity and Religion, to Blaspheme ; What reason have given to the Daughters of the Philistines to Rejoyce, and the Daughters of the Uncircumcised to Triumph ; What injury I have done hereby to the Souls of Men ; For the dismal effects of my Sin I mourn. But I rest assured, tho' these are the present effects of my Sins, that the Lord will, to shew his Sovereignty, bring good out of this evil, and get far greater Glory to himself, in saving such a wretch, than my Sin hath brought Dishonour to him. I cannot think so wise an Agent, who hath made all things for his own Glory, will suffer my case to sink so low, as not to raise Trophies to his own Glory even from thence.

3. I found a Deliverance from the Power of my Sin, a stronger than the strong Man Armed came upon him, and overcame him and took from him his Armour, wherein he trusted and divided his spoils, Luke 11. 22.

The Captain of my Salvation came and
 rescued me from my slavery: He took the
 captive from the power of the Tyrant, and,
 by his own Love and Grace, hath chained
 me to his own Chariot. He came by his
 Conquering Grace, and knock'd of my
 Fetters, unloosed my Chains, opened the
 Prison-Doors, and brought me out of the
 Prison-House. That which I so long pray-
 ed and hoped for, that which I intreated
 for, tho' I was brought to the greatest Shame,
 Poverty and Misery, I now find. There is
 a vast difference between the weak resist-
 ance of a convinced, informed, yea, terri-
 ble Conscience, and a Regenerate Nature,
 raised by the Spirit of God, raising up Faith
 and the Love of Christ. This breaks down
 before it; and by its all-conquering Pow-
 er, Crucifies the Flesh, with all the Af-
 fections and Lusts thereof. But tho' Sin
 hath not the Dominion over me, I find it yet
 in me, and is the greatest Enemy and Trou-
 ble I have in this World. I never was so
 sensible of two such contrary Natures, Af-
 fections, Desires, and Wills. That which
 is born of the Flesh, is Flesh, and it's Mo-
 tions, Desires and Affections are so: But that
 which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, and
 its Motions, Desires, Affections and Will
 are Spiritual. I sometimes cry out, O, wretched

retched Man that I am! who shall deliver from this body of Sin and Death? But in while again, I Triumph in Christ over all, and say, Thanks be to God, who gives me the Victory, through Jesus Christ my Lord. Rom. 7. 24, 25. I plainly feel the difference between the War and Strife there between Sin and Conscience, between Sin and the Law; and that which is between two distinct, yea, contrary Natures. I think, I can truly say, *I love the Law, I delight in it after the inward Man, that long for a perfect conformity thereunto.* I love it, now I am free from its Curse, now I am delivered from slavish Obedience to it, and can serve it, not in the oldness of the Letter, but newness of the Spirit. Now, I see Christ hath endured its Curse in my room and performed the Precepts in my stead to deliver me from Wrath, and obtain eternal Life and Favour. I love to look upon it, I delight in the Purity of it, in the strictness and exactness of it; for be it as strict as exact as it will, I have a Righteousness can answer it. And this draws my Heart into an intire Love, to both the Righteousness of the Law, and the Righteousness of Christ; and I truly long to be gone, when I shall transgress this holy Law no more.

I found new light breaking into my heart, discovering with vital heat, every more and more, the Mystery of Christ. These Texts did exceedingly run in my mind, Eph 1. 9. *Having made known to us the Mystery of his Will.* Chap. 3. 3, 4. *How by Revelation he made known unto me the Mystery; whereby, when you Read, you understand my Knowledge in the Mystery of Christ, which in other Ages was not known.* Col. 1, 26, 27. *What is the riches of the glory of this Mystery?* Chap. 4. 3. *To know the Mystery of Christ.* This word Mystery continually was with me. I prayed for a Revelation of this Mystery, and that might be led into it, by the Spirit of Revelation.

I yet hankered after the People that came with me, and heard there at times, being it was my Duty so to do, untill I understood, that I was desired to come there more; and the Lord graciously cast me upon Mr. H.'s Ministry, for which, I have reason to Bless the Lord, the little light I had, now increased, and grew with increasing Joy and Pleasure. There I also heard two Discourses from Mr. M. from *Phil.* Of Union with Christ, whereby I had that light given me into the whole Mystery of Christ, and then I stood amazed at my former

former ignorance, and came to see what little Light I formerly had (even in Notion of the Mystery of the Gospel. I heard also Mr. R. and Mr. N. whose Ministries were made very useful to me.

I had now another Teaching then ever had been long taught by Books, and by comparing things with things, and by a rational Judgment I came to the knowledge of many things; but there is an inspiration of the Almighty, which as much exceeds this as the light of the Sun doth that of a Glow-worm. *This is that unction from the Father One which teacheth all things.* 1 John 2. 2. That Spirit which reveals to us those Truths *That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither can enter into the heart of Man,* 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10.

The first Truth I was thus taught, was That Sinners, as such in all their Guilt, Filth, Blindness, Hardness, and Misery, were called to believe, and take comfort in Jesus Christ. I was taught, with overcoming Pleasure, that they are called immediately to fly to Christ for Refuge, and to lay hold of that Hope set before them; That there was no occasion to stay for such a sight and sense of their Sin and Misery; for such Mourning and Sorrow, such Humiliation and Repentance

distance; but to the want of all these, to
 away to Christ for all. I rejoiced to
 I might go, as Poor, as Miserable, as
 blind, and Naked, and so venture my Soul
 on him, so trust in him, and so receive
 and apply him to my self, as my Wisdom, Ri-
 ghteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.
 I was comforted to find, there was no oc-
 casion for my lying under Seven Years Hor-
 rors and Terroures, before I applied to, and
 applied Jesus Christ to my self. I found I had
 liberty, if I could but find Power to apply,
 and receive, and take comfort in him as
 mine, notwithstanding my Sins had been so
 many and great; to Repent first, and be Clean,
 Softned first, Washed first, then to Be-
 lieve in, then to Trust in, and apply Jesus
 Christ, and the Promise, is to begin at the
 long end. I bless the Lord, I came clear-
 to see this one thing, that we must come
 Christ under the consideration of Poor,
 filthy Sinners, believing for Righteousness
 and Grace, and as poor filthy Sinners for
 Sanctification, having nothing to plead but
 free Offer and a free Promise, and not un-
 der the consideration of Repenting, Belie-
 ving, Sanctified Sinners, and so pleading
 Mercy. It is true, we come Believing;
 we come as Sinners Believing, and so
 apply to, and apply Christ, and not as

Believers Believing, and so applying to, and applying Christ : The first is the Truth, the last is Preposterous, and turns all things out of Course.

This is to teach Men to come to the Physician with their Wounds healed, and to plead it for a Cure, to come as rich, and plead it for tried Gold, as seeing, and plead it for Eye-Salve, &c.

2dly. I never had such a Revelation of the Sovereignty of God, and such an Aquiescence therein. I see my Election, and my Salvation is purely owing thereunto. There is no reason can be given, why such an abominable wretch should be called and saved, and not others? But that he do what he will with his own, *Mat. 20. 16.* *And he hath Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth, Rom. 9. 15.*

3dly. The eternal Covenant between the Father and the Son for the Elect, was, very dark thing to me; but a most admirable Brightness, and ravishing Glory hath shone upon it. The Revelation of this Mystery, so far as I see thereof, is astonishing; what I know of it appears in a bright Lustre. I conceive the whole Gospel is but the opening this Mystery, and the revealing this Secret. All the Grace that is, or ever shall

manifested, is according to the purpose of his Will; and is but a Revelation of what he purposed in himself, before the World was. O, the Glory of those Purposes, formed in the Mind of God from all Eternity! I have read of Election, and believed Election, but the Glory of it was never thus revealed: That which is the Glory of it, in my Eye, is an Election in Christ, Eph. 1. 4. *He hath chosen us in him.* O! how much is in that Particle [*In*] Christ the Head, the Elect, the Body; so making up one eternally Beloved and Delightful Object.

4ly. The Mystery of the two Heads; *Adam* a Head of Sin and Condemnation to all his Posterity; *Christ* a Head of Righteousness and Life to all his, hath (in some measure) been opened to me in another kind of Light, Glory, and Sweetness than ever before. The Son of the Eternal God, set up as the Covenant, Head and Surety of all the Elect from Eternity; to whom they all as such a Head, Publick Person and Representative, stood related, in whom they were chosen, considered, and viewed by the Father, as compleat, and as such, *delighted, rejoiced, and joyed over before the foundation of the World*, Eph. 1. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 1. 2 have I viewed by Faith with exceeding Pleasure.

By reason of this, *I* looked upon the Lord Jesus; in his Person and Offices, in his Obedience and Sufferings, with another Eye than before. *viz.* As a publick Person: And so *I* view the Elect, Obeying with him, Crucified with him, Buried with him, rising with him, Ascending with him, and now sitting down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according to *Rom. 6. 4.* and *Eph. 2. 6.* Hereupon, when Faith is in exercise, *I* see my standing is secured, being grounded on Christ's standing: If the Covenant-Head stands, the Covenant-Seed must stand: and therefore, because he Lives, we shall Live also. This Union with Christ was never discovered to my Heart before. All as *I* used to concern my self about, was, a vital Union made in time; but *I* see an Union with him, as a publick Head, before the Foundation of the World; in whom *I* was Chosen by the Father, and Beheld, as Compleat; and so was Loved, and Rejoyced in, from all Eternity.

5ly. *I* was taught another Glorious Truth, *viz.* to draw nigh to God in the Person of Christ: There Deity dwells: God is manifested in Flesh, Cloathed with humane Nature, the fulness of the God-head dwells in him, *Col. 2. 9.* *I* desire to know God in him, infinite Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Truth and Good-

Goodness, yea, all the perfections of the Divine Nature are in that Person: These are called his Face and Glory; and they are beheld no where savingly, but in Christ Jesus. Here is the Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God manifested, even in the Face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 4. 6. *He that sees the Son, sees the Father also:* And in him alone, do all these perfections shine upon me with propitious Beams. I make my Addresses therefore to God in humane Nature, to God, as manifested in Flesh, in him, the Father and the Spirit Dwells: He is the Temple wherein the Divine Glory rests; there it Dwells; He is that Temple, therefore in which I Worship Deity. I draw near to God in him; and here alone I Commune with infinite Holiness, Truth, Power, Justice and Goodness. Here I have the most intimate Communion with the Father, as my God and Father. Here I see his reconciled Face; here I appear before Justice and Holiness, in the most entire Friendship with me, pleading my Cause, and securing my Salvation. The more just God appears, the more secure my Salvation appears.

Again, The Elect have Union with this Person: They are in him, *in whom dwells the fulness of the God-head bodily.* He the Fulness of God, and they the Fulness of him.

So is the Church said *to be the fulness of him that filleth all in all*, Eph. 1. 23. Thus by Union with the second Person in the Trinity are they united to God: An Union transcending all Thought, had not the Eternal Son assumed the humane Nature into Union with himself, there had been no Union for fallen Man with God: But God became United to Man's Nature, that in by, and through the humane Nature, Man might have Union with God. So are the Elect nearer to God than the Angels themselves, yet the Creature remains a Creature still; but so inexpressibly near to God, as our Lord saith, *John 17. 21. As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us.* Now, then, *I behold God in Christ, and I behold the Elect in Christ.* Where the Lord beholds me, *I behold him.* He beholds me in the Person of Christ, and *I behold him in the Person of Christ; where the Father is Union, I am in Union.* God and Man meets in that one Person. This is the Temple wherein Deity dwells. Here the Divine Glory is placed. *In this I stand, and Worship God: He is my Sanctuary, which was not only a place of Refuge, but of Worship.* This is that Temple, which when it was Destroyed, was raised again in three Days, *John 2. 19.* It is God in Christ

all inward, and all outward Worship
to be performed to : God in Christ is the
ly Object of my Faith, my Love, my
ear, my Praise, Trust, Joy, &c. It is God
the Person of Christ, God in humane Na-
ture, is the Object of my Prayers and Ad-
dresses: My Access is to God, by, and in
Christ Jesus. What is the Preaching of the
Gospel, but a Declaration a Discovery,
and Manifestation of God in Christ? To
Worship God in the Person of Christ, I was
stranger to before ; for notwithstanding,
all as I believed before, respecting the U-
nion of both Natures in the Person of Christ,
yet I never made my Addresses to God, in his
Person, but came to an infinite Being, as at a
distance thro' his Blood, as Meriting, I might
make my Addresses to him with acceptance.
This I understood ; but I rejoyce in the My-
stery of Worshipping, and enioying God in
Christ. How glorious is it to love, Worship,
and enjoy God in my Nature! How near
doth this make Deity! And, how indearing
it is to me ! O! the glorious sight to see the
Lord my God in Christ, and in him to be-
hold my self. Tho' I have a base filthy
Nature, yet in Christ, I have a pure, uncor-
rupted, undefiled Nature, in which I am
represented before God. Though I have
broken the Law with exceeding aggravati-
ons

ons, and offended out of measure, yet in Christ have I kept it perfectly without fault, and, in his Obedience, I stand before the Throne. Though I have laid up Wrath heap upon heap, *Rom. 2. 2.* and deserved all the Curses of the Law. Tho' I have contracted a Debt of Ten Thousand Talents, and am not able to pay one Mite, yet I am presented before the strict Eye of Justice, in the Satisfaction of my Jesus, in, and with him I Died, arose again from the Dead, and Ascended into Heaven, and stand in his Person and Righteousness; and so, being found in him, have on his Righteousness. He views me, not in my self; for there is nothing but fault, but in Christ, and then he sees no Iniquity, nor Transgression in me. This is the Faith I live in, I rejoice in; but sometimes a Cloud is drawn over it, and then I Sin by unbelief. I also understood not the Law entered the Heart and Conscience, and held a Lordship and Dominion over it. I was under the Dominion of the Law to the very last. Whilst I was Obedient, I had peace in my Conscience, tho', at the same time, no acts of Faith went forth to Jesus Christ. When I Sinned, I fell under terrible Horror; and I took these Lashes of the Law, for the stirrings and workings of the Spirit; but when Christ

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Christ entered, he dispossessed the Law of its dominion. Christ in me, is now the principle of my Obedience.

I see, through rich Grace, Christ Jesus hath perfectly obeyed the Laws Precepts, and fully endured its Curse in my Nature, for me; Hence he is the end of the Law to us for Righteousness. It is, indeed, the Eternal Rule of Righteousness; but I have nothing to do with its Curse; for Christ hath born it, and its Promises are too weak. The Law cannot give Life, if it could; Righteousness should have been given by it. I am not to obey therefore, either from fear of its Curses, or to obtain Life by its Promises. *This is to serve in the oldness of the letter, Rom. 7. 6. But being dead to the Law, and married to Christ, I am to bring forth fruit to God, v. 4. Love is the only Principle; and since this hath taken the Throne, the dominion of Sin is thrown down. The Bond-Woman and her Son must be cast out, and such Obedience is Illegitimate; the Laws-Off-spring, are all slaves, and Bondsmen: And what saith the Scripture? *Why, cast out the Bond-Woman, and her Son, for the Son of the Bond-Woman shall not be heir with the Son of the Free-Woman, Gal. 4. 30. We are Children of Promise, and therefore**

fore every act of our Obedience is to be the Fruit of the Promise.

I now come to see, in very clear Light, a specifical difference between my present Experience, and all as I had before, which I shall give some brief account of.

1. There is a specifical difference in my Faith from all that I had before.

Faith leads us wholly out of our selves, to venture upon, to trust in, to lay hold of, to receive and apply Jesus Christ as our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. Now,

1st. In all that Experience, I was never led out of my self. 1. At the time I called my Conversion, I was not led out of my self for the Doctrine I believed led me to trust in my self: I believed I was to perform sincere Repentance, Faith and Obedience, as the Condition of my acceptance with God; how could I then come out of my own Obedience for Justification? That which is the Condition of Justification, can never be renounced as Loss and Dross and Dung in the point of Justification, if they are the Conditions of acceptance with God, ought to trust in them as such.

2^{dly}. When

edly. When my Principles in part were
anged, I believed them Conditions still,
I believed God wrought them by his
mighty Power; and if they are Con-
itions of my Pardon and Acceptance
th God, How can I Disclaim them?
ow can I Renounce them? How can I
me Naked to Christ's Obedience for ac-
ptance with the Father?

But now I am made utterly to renounce
y sincere Obedience (and yet for this
ade the more Obedient) as having the
ast hand, or influence to remove the Curse
ad obtain the Blessing. This is wholly
wing to the Obedience and Sufferings of
hrist: And so I see Justification is freely
his Grace (not through what I do) *but*
through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
om. 3. 24. Free it is without Desert, or
erit, yea against all our Demerits; free
ithout Condition; for if it was Conditional,
could not be free, then he that performed
e Condition could claim it as a Debt, and
at justly; and then he had whereof to
Glory: *And so to him that worketh* (that per-
ormeth the Condition) *is the reward not rec-*
oned of Grace, but of Deb, Rom. 4. 4. But
God justifies his Elect, whilst Ungodly v. 5.
and Righteousness is imputed without
Works, and therefore it is free without any
Con-

Condition; And this, through Grace, have not only the notion of, but the Faith and Experience of in my own Heart. Here upon,

2dly. In all that Experience, I was never brought as a Sinner to Christ. I never daren venture on a free-Promise, unless I could feel some inherent Qualification, as being weary and heavy laden, brokenness of Heart Repentance, Sanctification; &c. if I did, no I dared not to venture; I thought it would be Presumption: But when I had the presence and sight of any of these, then I could venture I could come as a heavy laden Sinner, as a penitent Sinner, but not Nakedly as a Sinner.

But now I am brought to Christ in my Blood and Filthiness. I came to Jesus under the apprehensions of having no good thing (whatsoever sense of Sin there was) I saw nothing but hardness and blindness, uncleanness, and filthiness, darkness and enmity, and as such I came for Cure.

The carnal Heart takes encouragement from some good he finds within. Saith he, now I have gotten such a good qualification, now I will go, now I can believe, now I can trust, for I am not such a base wretch as I was before, now I am altered and changed. This is Pride. But for a Soul whilst he apprehends that

that he is *Poor, and Miserable, and Blind, and Naked*, to believe, to trust, to lay hold of, to receive, and apply Jesus Christ, as Riches, Righteousness, Life and Salvation; is an act of Faith indeed. This is Faith of the Operation of God; this, no Natural Man can come up to.

Obj. But must not a Person be reformed first? Washed and Cleansed first? Repent first? And then Believe for the Pardon of his Sins, and Salvation of his Soul.

Ans. Whensoever the Lord gives Faith, it finds the Sinner in the midst of his Sin, in his Hardness, Impenitency and Filthiness; and as it finds the Poor Creature in that miserable Condition, it leads it to Christ as Naked for Righteousness, as filthy to be Washed, as Blind for Eye-salve, as under the Dominion of Sin, to be delivered from its Slavery and Bondage, and the Sinner hath Liberty to apply Christ, and his Righteousness to his Soul as his own, without the view of one holy Quality in it: For when he is applied, Sanctification will follow as the Fruits thereof: So that this I make the blessed Difference from all my former Experience. I went forth to Christ whilst I believed there was nothing in me but
O Guilt

Guilt, Blindness, Hardness, Uncleaness and Enmity to God. I was emptied of all Qualifications, all Terms, and all Conditions, and was drawn to Christ as a Sinner, and nothing else but a Sinner.

3. In all that Experience, I never as a Naked, Empty Sinner, believed in Christ. I never, as such a one, ventured upon him, put Confidence and Trust in him. For,

1. My first Experience was not Faith; for the thing I believed proves not to be true, *viz.* That Christ Died for all Men to Merit Salvation, on the Conditions of sincere Repentance, &c. and that they might have Power and Ability given them; so that they might either perform, or not perform them. This I believed, and accordingly I did perform these as the Conditions of the Promises, and so applied all the Promises to my self. Upon this I depended, on this I Trusted, this was the Faith I then had; and this is the Faith of those that hold *General Redemption*, if they understand what they hold.

Now, in all this, 1. Here is no Justifying Object. That which justifies a Sinner in the sight of God, is the *Alone Object of justifying Faith*: For nothing less than what satisfies God, can truly satisfy the Conscience. And this is the Righteousness of

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Jesus Christ Alone. Such who are ignorant of this Righteousness, are ignorant of God's Righteousness; and so going about to establish their own Righteousness, *have not submitted to the Righteousness of God*, Rom. 10. 4. For if this Righteousness consists in such an Obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ to the pure Nature of Man, to the Precepts of the Law: And in such a Suffering and enduring of the Curse and Penalty, as whereby such a perfect satisfaction is given to the Law and Justice of God, as now the very Justice and Faithfulness of God, obligeth him to justify and save the Sinner for whom this is performed and done. Then it is impossible, that a person whilst he believes *General Redemption* (except he is inconsistent with himself) should believe in this Righteousness, for the very Doctrine denies there is any such thing: It allows of a conditional, but not of an Absolute Satisfaction. I know, for this, I shall be accounted most exceeding uncharitable; and will be thought I do it out of ill will against them: But let Men think what they will, *I must do the Work of him that hath sent me*, and in Duty to him, and Love to the Souls of the many sincere Ones among them (who are like those, Rom. 9. 31. *Who follow after Righteousness, but have not attained it, because* they

they seek it not by Faith, but, as it were, by the Works of the Law.) Do I speak thus very plain,

2. Hereupon there is no true act: There is no trusting, no resting, no applying and bringing home Christ Jesus and his Righteousness to the Soul: For Christ's Merits and Death (according to this Doctrine) avails nothing to the Sinner's Pardon, without the Conditions are performed. All that Christ hath done, is to put Salvation in the Creature's Power. What must be looked to now? What must be trusted in? What must be depended upon? Christ's Righteousness alone? No, no; see to thy Conditions and Terms, that they are performed and done by thee. Christ is to be thanked for Meriting Salvation for you on such Terms, and for giving you Power to perform them; but you must thank your selves for performing them, otherwise you would have been Damned notwithstanding all that he hath done. I speak not in all this against Repentance, Faith, and sincere Obedience. Every Converted Soul Believes and Repents, and sincerely Obeys; but I speak against their being the Terms and Conditions of the Lord's Favour. They are the Fruits of his Love, and not the Conditions of it. From hence it appears in my first Experience, I had not true Faith.

2dly.

2ly, I had it not after, on the change of my Principles ; for tho I applied to Christ, yet I belived not in him. I came to him by Prayer, but not with Faith in Prayer. I came to the Promise, but not with Faith in it. I saw a Righteousness and a Fountain a great way off, but unbelief kept me from it. I did not appropriate and apply that Righteousness, nor come and drink at that Fountain. I heard Christ speak I heard him promise, *I will not cast you out*, but I did not believe him. Now, thro infinite rich Grace, I am enabled to believe him. I not only apply to him for what my Soul wants, but have trust and confidence in him for it. I am enabled to come as a poor, guilty Creature, and venture my Soul upon the perfect, spotless Righteousness of the Son of God : And if I had as many Souls as there are Stars and Dust, I see such an infinite worth and value in the Righteousness of Christ, as, methinks I could venture them all upon it. I am enabled to come as a poor diseased Creature, and to venture my Soul in the Arms of the Almighty Physician, believing he will Cure me : And here I lie for Light, Life, Faith, Love, and the mighty pouring out of his own Spirit ; yea, he enables me often to say, *not only in the Lord there is Righteousness and*

*Strength, but in the Lord have I Righteousness
and Strength.*

In a word, now the Lord revealed the way of Salvation to me with Power; he brought my Will to submit to it, and my Heart to rest and be satisfied therein; wherein may be observed, the assent of the Understanding, the consent of the Will, and an intire Rest, Trust, and Affiance in the Lord Jesus, as different from all before, as Light from Darknes. For,

1. That Light I had in the way of God's saving Sinners, was Darknes. I was ignorant of God's Righteousness, and thought it was by a Righteousness of sincere Works, as the Conditions thereof.

2. The consent of my Will was, to be saved by that Righteousness, and by that Covenant; and now it consents joyfully to throw, with indignation, my Righteousness at the Foot of Jesus, and count it all as Loss, Dross and Dung, that I may be found in his. I renounce those foolish Covenants on which I built, and rest in that everlasting one, which he hath made with me in Christ, which is ordered in all things and sure.

3. My

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My trust was, if I performed the Conditions, he would perform his Promise; I trust in the Lord Jesus, as having performed the Conditions of my Justification and Salvation, and rest in his free promise to me without Conditions, where Justification, Faith, Repentance, and all coherent Holiness, is secured to me here, and eternal Blessedness hereafter. Now, if after this, people will say they can see no difference (as some have done) surely it is because the God of this World, by Prejudice, Opinion, hath blinded their Eyes.

I think here is enough said to manifest a specific Difference between the Faith I then had, and that I now have. I could add hereunto, That in all that Experience, Christ Jesus was not the alone Foundation of my Faith for Justification, Sanctification, Perseverance and eternal Life: And through Grace, I could say much respecting the Fruits of Faith, which are specifically different from all before. I have known what it is to Pray in Faith, Praise in Faith, Preach in Faith, and to Obey in Faith.

2. There is a specific difference in my sorrow for and turning from Sin.

1. In

1. In my first Experience, I never had Conviction of my Defiled and Polluted Nature: For I then believed, *Adam's* brought only the first Death; and I used to Argue, if Infants were Polluted in the Nature, Christ would not have told his Disciples, *unless they became as one of them, they should not enter into the Kingdom of God.* So that my Principle would not allow me to bewail and lament, to hate and loathe, and my self for it, in which I now see the greatest Abomination; Nothing in all the World appears so vile, so hateful to me as this Fountain of Sin, this Sink of Filthiness; and therefore, I heartily cry out with *David*, *Pf. 51. 5. Behold! I was shaped in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.*

2. The Mourning I had was not free and genuine; it was not from a sense of Pardon, but to obtain it; and therefore it was forced, and strained, believing it was the Condition of Pardon. I gathered up all the Sins I could reckon from my Youth up, and forced a Mourning with great labour and toil, that I might perform the Condition, and so get the Blessing. And since that change in my Principles before mentioned, my Repentance was for Life, and not from it. The Principle was wrong

the End was wrong; and where the principle and End is wrong, the Action it needs be so. There is a vast difference between Mourning for, and turning from Sin, from Legal and Evangelical Principles, and how a Man that performs Repentance, as the Condition of Pardon, could it otherwise than Legally, I know not. Repentance is a turn from Sin to God which can never be, but in, and through Christ; in, and by whom alone, we can come to God; and therefore it necessarily includes Faith in him, and is expressly put for *Acts 2. 38.* To repent and turn from unbelief, is to believe. Herein lies the specific difference. My Sorrow for my Sins, flows from looking upon him whom I have pierced: There seeing the horrid Nature of Sin.

I do acknowledge, I have Preached this formerly to be the true Ground and Spring of Godly Sorrow for Sin; and I have endeavoured to come at it from this Ground: but whilst I could not make a particular application of Christ to my self, nor see that he was Crucified for me; I had not in my own Soul the Experimental apprehension of the Evil of Sin, nor the Sorrow and Mourning for Sin, from this Root. This

This I had the Notion of, but felt not the Power and Strength of, before.

3. There is a specifical Difference in my Experience respecting the Power and Dominion of Sin. I find that Promise made good in this respect, *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not have Dominion over you; for you are not under the Law, but under Grace:* Whilst I remained under the Power of the Law, I remained under the power of Sin; but being dead to the Law by the Body of Christ, I am delivered from that wherein I was held. It is true, that Sin dwells in me, but Christ Reigns, and gives me the Victory.

It is the Doctrine of Grace that teaches me to deny all Ungodliness, and hath been the only means of my Salvation; tho' I doubt not many will speak evil of it, because I have been made to receive it, and it shall be Argument enough against it, because I profess it. Speaking evil of that which they never felt the power of, in their own Souls; I am sure they which feel the power of it, cannot speak against it. For when all fails, the Doctrine of Grace is Mighty through God for the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and having

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ing in a readiness to revenge all disobedience,
Cor. 10. 4, 5, 6.

The Difference, in my Knowledge and Understanding, is as great as between Light and Darknes. This I have already given an account of, and I shall only add. In a word, respecting the difference in my Knowledge, it consists exceedingly in the manner of knowing. All those Truths new before, are now impregnated with Light, Life, Power and Efficacy, which never felt. There is a vast difference between knowing of things in the Light of Reason and by a humane Faith, and between seeing the same things set before us in the Light of the Spirit, and brought home to the Heart with such Vivacity, Spirit and Power, as is not to be expressed, working through every Power and Faculty of the Soul. What Faint, Dead, Lifeless things were the Notions of God and his Perfections, Christ, and his Glory? The Spirit, and his Works been? But, O, the Glory of the Person, Righteousness and Fullness of the Son of God! He shines like the Sun in its Meridian Brightness, whilst all things, besides him, appears, but at most, in a Glow-worm Light, and those which oppose him, in most filthy Darknes.

The

The Natural Man, indeed, knows the things of the Spirit, viz. The things of God, the Mystery of Christ: those things he did know; When the Spirit comes, they appear so Bright, so Glorious, to what they did before, as he knows not how to call that a knowledge of the

All as I knew before, all as I have Preached and Written before, appears as Dead, and Lifeless things to me.

This is the Account of my Conversion and calling home to the Lord Jesus, *that the Father hath given me, shall come to me, John 6. 37.*

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*A Brief Account of the Trial of this Faith,
and some Experiences thereupon.*

BY a strong Hand, the Lord caused some few eminent Christians to believe he would yet be gracious towards me. The Distress that my Case had put their Souls into, turn'd not to Enmity and Cruelty against me, but Pity, and their Cries to God were great and strong, and they received satisfaction in their own Breasts, that the Lord would appear and do a marvellous Work for me, and in me; and one thing I cannot forbear relating, because it was so particular.

A Gracious Holy Person being in great distress of Soul on my account, not being able to bear up under the Thoughts that my Soul would perish to Eternity; under whose Ministry she had late and been often comforted. The thoughts of what a Hell I must endure, if I went thither, caused exceeding
P trouble

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trouble on her Spirits; and in this distress she besought the Lord, that if it was his Pleasure (as he had discovered many particular things to her) he would give her some satisfaction respecting my State; and in her distress, on this account, she opened her Bible, and the first words she fixed her Eyes upon, was, *Luke 19. 9, 10. This day is Salvation come to this house, inasmuch as he is also a Son of Abraham: For the Son of Man is come to seek, and to save, that which was lost.* This quieted and stilled her Spirits. After this she went to a Friend's House, where a Bible lying by, she opened it and pitched on the same Chapter, and Verses, and this became a very great instrument of good to my Soul, throughout my sore Affliction. Some others received the like Answers; and though I took no comfort from thence, yet, by this means, I had the benefit of their Cries, Exhortations and Advice: and was gladly instructed by those whom I had once taught. When I had received comfort, I soon Communicated it to these: And I have since often remembered, what this eminent Christian told me, *If the Lord had given me Faith, I would try it.* I remember, also, with what power that Text dwelt with me, *Rev. 18. Come buy of me Gold tried in the Fire.* I thought I had Gold before, but when

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came to be tried, it proved Dross : But now, if the Lord should say, I'll give you grace that shall abide the Furnace, and here I will try it.

Before I received comfort, as I was mourning in secret for my exceeding great Abominations before the Lord, I turned to *Rom.* and there read, and aggravated my Sin in the words of the Apostle, untill I came to verse 24. *For the Name of God is Blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.* And in the Margin of my Bible, was directed to *Ezek.* 36. 20. which I read ; but I was afraid to read further, fearing some dreadful threatning (as is usual in the Prophets) would follow : But to my amazement, I found the words following, *but I had pity for mine holy Name, which the House of Israel had profaned among the Heathen, whither they went.* And a Promise following, to sanctify his great Name in them, *even before those, in whose Eyes they had profaned it.* This he would do *for his holy Name sake, which they had profaned,* and that by bestowing upon them the Blessings of the New-Covenant, v. 25. *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, &c.*

This I wondred at, that I should meet with such a Promise, so exactly suiting my case, when I feared the Contrary ; yet, I

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could not apply it: But when I came to receive comfort by Faith in Christ, this promise shone upon me with great Glory; and became so applied and Imprest upon my heart, as it lay down, and arose up with me, *I will Sanctify my name in thee, before their Eyes: And again I will Sanctify my name in thee, before their Eyes.* I also believed, he would act in a way of Sovereign goodness, Respecting all the Miserable Circumstances I was under; and I found these so twisted together, that when my Faith was strong in Christ, for my Eternal Salvation, it was so for these things also; and as it failed, and fainted in the one, so it did in the other; and respecting every one of them, I have been tried to the very heart.

I had a very great value and esteem for those Ministers, I was intimate with, and the Dishonour and Reproach, I also brought on them Personally Considered, Exceedingly wounded me, and I am not insensible how much my sad case must, and did, affect them: yet I thought they would be glad to hear (though I knew it would be difficult for them to believe it) that God had laid hold on me: for I Remember how affectionately Mr. W. C. spake to me, with Eyes lift up to Heaven, *the Lord surprise you with his Sovereign Grace!* and

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and indeed, it was all a surprise: When I had received Faith in Christ, and comfort from him, I wanted to acquaint all the World, that they might know what a wretch Christ Jesus had laid hold on; and I was desired peculiarly to go and acquaint Mr. W. C. but I refused, lest it should be thought I did, it to Ingratiate my self into his; and so, into the rest of the Ministers favour again: But I chose to converse with Mr. B. D.'s for whom, I had a peculiar respect, and at a time appointed, I went, big with hopes, that the Lord would Sanctify his name in me, before his Eyes, and those that were with him, by causing them to know, he had sprinkled clean water upon me, and in order thereto, I gave in brief to him, and then with him, the account of my Experiences from the First, to that time, but I soon found my self mistaken; for no sooner had I done; but, as if he had, wrapt himself in mount Sinai's fire; yea, as if it had filled every faculty, of Soul and Body: He poured it forth upon me as it were with, Thunders, and Lightnings, and Smaoke. He told me (to this effect) That such an Opportunity he had wanted, and now the Providence of God had given it him, he would speak, he found what I was for; I was for grasping after comfort, but he charged me to fly comfort.

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as from the face of a Serpent ; yea, as from the Devil himself ; for his part , he was frightned in his Spirit , with respect to Prayer for me , when he would pray for me, he was so rebuked, as he could not, with any freedom , and therefore, desired me to consider what a case mine was, I asked him what must I do ? there was a difference between a Man seeing the fire in the Chimney and having it at his back ; the wrath of God was come into my Soul, the fire burnt me, what must not I fly from it ? The Avenger of Blood was behind me, what must not I fly for refuge ? He answered :

I should flee from comfort, as, from the face of a Serpent ; if he was in my case, he would never look for it. It was Grace, Grace in the heart only as he would look for. I told him how my desires went forth after Grace, and that my Heart went out for Sanctification, as well as Justification, but I could not do either, then covet both, I Instanced in Heb. 6. 18. *That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, they might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge and laid hold of the hope set before them,* these things he allowed proper for Persons, that were converted out of the World : But not for a Person, that had Ministered in holy things, such were to be slain even upon the

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horns of the Altar ; many more dreadful things did he pronounce against me, this discourse, I was strangely dashed, my heart fell within me and at night my thoughts were too much disturbed to sleep. I began to think that he was in the right, and I was in the wrong, and that I had believed, and taken comfort too soon : I then began to grow up all , and to say there was no hope, and then many grievous thoughts entered to destroy my self, for I found for me to live in despair, under my Circumstances, as impossible, to have nothing but Horror, and Terror ; to my last Moments , was dreadful news, and I could not bear it ; the concern of my mind so Disordered my body, as I became all in a Flame , and never burned more in the highest Fever I ever I had : Then my Faith also sunk suspecting the forementioned promise seeing thus contradicted (as I then thought) and I had nothing but darkness before me : And in the hurry of my thoughts, I cryed to the Lord, that he would not suffer me to be deceived any longer, and if I must fall under Horror and Despair that I might do so : But (through rich Grace) before the night was over , I came to my self, and I was enabled to look through the Error, and Evil of that Doctrine (a Doctrine that most

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most certainly will be found at last come from the place where it drives Me to.) I considered, whether I had committed the Sin against the Holy Ghost : According to all as ever I had read about it, how near soever I might come to it, I had not been guilty of the Sin, and that Text sounded in my Ears. Math. 23, 32. *All manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven, but the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.* I considered, if this doctrine be true, Mr. Clark's was false ; and after the Wind and Storm was over, through infinite rich Grace ; I found the house stood on the Same Rock, on which it was built *Viz.* Christ Jesus.

And that he might not leave the matter so, he follows it home with a Dreadful Letter (I am sure at turns it hath proved so to me) wherein he Condemns my Conversion, and tells me the strongest corrections and not comforts are to be applied to me, wherein he Prays that the fire may burn, for Christ's sake and my own, and if it doth not wholly consume me, he assures me, his thoughts are, though I dye with only a dram of comfort, so I dye a natural Death, my state will be much more sad than at present. This is that he aims at, in his whole Letter, that I might fall under

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fire of Gods wrath, that it may burn
and burn me to the Bone ; it will (he
h) but eat off Dead Flesh : The Letter
ong ; and I am loath to fill up my Book
h it and had it been only a private Letter
ween him, and my self ; and so his own
ate Sentiments, or a thing done in haste
in heat, which upon second thoughts
ht be thought was not proper, I should
print it.

But he not only saith in the Conclusion
his Letter, it is that he will abide by,
l believes will be owned at the Great
y : But gives me an account it was a
ter read to all the Elders met together,
f my former Acquaintance of the Par-
ular way) except two, who were not
re, and unanimously agreed and con-
ted unto ; by them ; and not only so,
t since they have declared to two Mes-
sengers, sent to them from *Mr. R.*'s Church
account ; that they do stand by that
atter.

And whereas it may be very well won-
dered at, that I should print it because it
is open, and aggravates my Sin I freely
clare it is the Sin, I heartily Bewail, La-
ment Repent and am ashamed of, and
at the Acknowledgment, and Confession.
ace will not have it's Glory if my
Crimes

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Crimes are hidden, and their aggravation covered: *For this Cause I obtained mercy, that in me might be made known the all long suffering of Christ*, 1. Tim. 1. 13. The greater the Sin appears, the greater the Patience. My exceeding Crimes shew what kind of Patience the Lord's is. If you want to learn what kind of Suffering the Lord's is, look upon me, and you will see it to be long Suffering, yea, all long-Suffering; if you want to know what kind of Grace and Love, that is, which dwells in the Heart and Breast of God, look upon me, and you will see it to be Sovereign, *That he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy*, that no foreseen goodness in the Creature was any Motive nor any Evil, a Bar; if it had, where had been? Look upon me, and you will see it to be free; free without Merit, free against all demerits, free without Conditions. O when you read my Sins, behold the greatest instance of free, rich, glorious Grace: Never doth Grace shine so bright, as when *Manasseh, a Magdalen, a Jaylor, a Pardoner*, and now I sit at the foot of it's Throne and lye there as conquered, overcome, and brought home by it.

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March the 15, 1699.

The LETTER.

Mr. Taylor,

have considered your ~~the~~ Conversion, and the circumstance of Peace and Comfort you have it. It is not above three Weeks, or a Month at you pretend to this Work of God upon your soul, after so eminent a course of Sin, for so many Years, under the highest Profession: And the rarest character a Man can attain to in the visible Church to be an Elder. A course of Sin, the blackest and deepest Character that is given to any Sin in the Word of God. That text is a terrible one, A Whore is a deep ditch: He that is abhorred of God shall fall into it. And this Sin never discovered by you, will the Providence of God eminently reveal. I repeat this in Writing, though I have already in Discourse with you, laid it before you, because it is with great weight on my mind; and to add a little more here, to what I have said: I am astonish'd as often as I think of that most explorable State of Soul you are in; to be able to look up to Heaven in the Pulpit, and to pretend to have the Conduct of Souls, and to minister to them in the most glorious Mysteries of Redemption, by Preaching, Baptizing, and the Admi-

Administration of the Lord's Supper, and at the same time, a Hypocritical Soul acting your Part in all those sacred Offices. A Soul, full of Unclean Thoughts, of the most loathsome and Envenomed Nature. Sir, think, what discord was between your Head and Heart; great Light, fine Parts, strong Reasoning, and a Soul wallowing in a most Beastly Sin. With what Eyes could you look up to Heaven, when you, and I, and Mr. Keble sang the Antelucanous Hymns in Chatham River, in the Night? And under all these Considerations, would you have Me, and Others, to believe your Conversion, like a Mushroom, grown up in a Night? Sir, I have, since I saw you, rejoic'd I said what I did to you; and that you may know my Thoughts are the same they were then, nay, more improved and confirmed; I have wrote these Lines to you, and shall farther say, That I believe the strongest Corrosives, not Comforts, are to be apply'd to you. I should have much better liked you, had I seen you almost dumb with Grief, and that Sorrow had filled every faculty of Soul and Body, and that you would, at least, have lost one Eye for Christ by weeping it out. I know a great Person did so, on a bad account for a Lover, and shall be Grief for Creatures, put out one of the Windows of the Body, and shall not Grieve for the greatest Subject of Sorrow, which is Sin, and for Sin of the blackest Character? For such

in as bids defiance to the Understanding, the
Conscience, and to Heaven it self; and which
is the worst aggravation, all done under the
Veil of Religion. A Man acting the Devil in
the Habit of a good Angel: For so the El-
ders are call'd the Angels of the Churches.
Cause not only the loss of an Eye, but make the
soul Magh'or Mis'abib. Had I seen you fear-
ing Comfort, and courting Sorrow, and crying
out, as Jeremiah in another case, O! that
my Head were Water, and mine Eyes a
Fountain of Tears! Is there any Sin like
mine? Is there any Sorrow, or Sufferings but
what I would chuse, or embrace, so I
may not be the subject of eternal Venge-
ance, and be separated for ever from that
glorious Being, as I have so highly Sinned a-
gainst? I must confess, such a frame would
have given me hope, and might have war-
ranted (possibly) the pouring in a little Balm,
which you say, your Friends decline to do; and
I must say, with great Reason: for if wise Phy-
sicians will not give sleepy Potions, tho' they
may give ease, lest Nature, and other proper
Medicines given for the Disease, should be
weakened and interrupted, and the Patient Die.
To your Friends, that are Friends indeed, do
with you; and be assured, they are Physicians
of no value that are so frequently with you, and
whom you take delight to speak of your Ex-
periences,

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Periences, and from whom you meet with Opium
 instead of awakening and painful Medicines
 which, though in their Operations, threaten to
 overturn Nature, in the event, save it. Sir, the
 Sins and Errours of my Life (tho' not in any
 respect like yours) are the continual Subject
 that I mourn over; and I have often received
 more evidence from the Grace of Repentance, than
 from any other Grace: This demonstrates my
 Faith, and shews the Truth of my Love. When
 I feel my self affected with Sin, from all the
 blessed ingredients that compound the Grace
 of Repentance, 2 Cor. 7. 10, 11, 12. For I ever
 took it to flow from diverse Principles, Fear
 of God, Love to him, self-Abhorrence, desire
 of Conformity to God, Grief for offending so Gracious,
 Great, Holy, and infinitely Glorious a Being.
 And nothing grieves me more, than that
 I know no more of the Evil of Sin: That Evil
 that is more Evil then Hell: For it is but the
 effect of it; and I remember, when once in a
 despairing Condition on a sick Bed, when
 I thought I should not only Die, but certainly
 expected to Perish everlastingly: I yet put
 this Request, Lord, seeing I must be Damned,
 grant I may not be a Sinner again when I
 am there in Hell. This God was pleased to turn
 into a gracious Reflection in me thus: Canst thou
 be Damned, and yet desire not to be a sinner in
 Hell? and those Despairing Thoughts vanish.

and ever since (which is now about 35 Years) I have lived a Life of Hope, but very rarely of Comfort. Nor, indeed, dare I make too much of that, which of it self, is no Evidence of an Interest in Christ; and which I have found too many lean upon more than their Graces; and who at last, notwithstanding all their pretences to Comfort, have given too evident Proofs of very little, if any Grace at all. I take not this State of mine to be a legal State. I bless God: that hath given me very clear Notions of the Covenant of Grace, and of the Righteousness of Christ, and that I have an Interest in the one, or the other. I Ascend, but do not Descend: I conclude not that I am Elected, and therefore I must believe in Christ, and Love him, and that such a strong Presumption, will work such conclusions; but I ascend from a feeling of a Hungring, Thirsting Spirit after him from a sense of Sin and Misery, and a relying on Christ for Life, Righteousness and Salvation, together with the appearance of a measure of all other Graces, to a conclusion that I am Elected, that I am Christ's; yet this conclusion often fluctuates, and is not the same at all times. I am very willing to work out my Salvation with fear and trembling, tho' I have well considered what follows, that it is God that worketh in me, &c. I am for passing the time of my sojourn here, in fear; and after all my Study and

Experience, I find no better ground in the Word of God to stand upon, nor no state of Soul I have yet met with, that is safer than what I have said, and I rejoyce in all my Sufferings and Losses, and Temptations, and could wish them a thousand times more than I have met with, rather than miss an Interest in Christ. I am for Joy when I come to Heaven. I am for Labour, Sorrow and Sufferings here; and if God will, at any time, let me Drink of the Brook by the way, and so have lifting up of Head, I shall, and have often Prayed, they may be no more than do me good; and let me have a Thorn in the Flesh, as Paul, so his Grace be sufficient for me, I am contented. Sir, I have said this, because I found a Threat of Antinomian spinning in all your Discourses with me: And, let me tell you faithfully their Notions, are as proper for you, as Opium to a Man in a Fever; and without the Spirit of Prophecy, a Man may fore-tell, that you must either let them go, and take up with other safe Medicines for your State, or in outward appearance, there is little hope of your well-doing, and, which is much to be feared, you will prove a greater Monster, even in this World than hitherto you have appeared to be. I am not so afraid of those Principles, where they are inhibited by Men, who have either Grace antecedent to them, or a good measure of Grace with them

which

which prevents their Influence, tho' it doth not remove their Mistakes: But for a Man in your case, so dreadfully circumstanc'd, to suck in those Notions, to remove the Fire from your back (to use your own Notion) O! let the Fire burn, burn for Christ's sake, and your sin, let it burn, and do but desire, and that with submission, that it may not wholly consume you, and I assure you, my Thoughts are, that if you Die without a dram of comfort, so you Die Natural Death, your state will be much more safe, then I see it at present: For God, for eminent sins, may let his own Die in Darkness, and yet take them into Abraham's Bosom. A far better, and greater Man than you, who lived many Ages past, for fear recanted his Opinion about the Presence of Christ in the Sacrament: That Guilt lay so on him, that the Day he Died (asking what Day it was) they told him the Epiphany of our Lord, either this Day (saith he) shall Christ appear to me, either to my comfort, or discomfort: so doubtingly did that Great Man Die, and yet, I doubt not, but it is well with him for ever. And now, Sir, that I have said, is not to put you upon legal sorrow, I know the choicest ingredients in the Grace of Repentance, is to be humble for sin, as against a good and gracious God; and as sin is against the holiness of his Nature, and the Righteousness of his Law, and against the

Obligation of Redemption, Grace, yet God hath been pleased, that Fear, sense of Wrath, Terror (especially where a Man hath eminently fallen) should be mixt with the Principles afore-said that all may work together; and you are in your case not to be curious, which seems to be of most force, at least, at some time; so you find some measure of all the Principles afore-said. Heman was a gracious Man, yet the Terror of the Lord drank up his Spirit. Read the 88 Psalm, His Psalm, and a dolorous Psalm it is. Your case is such, with respect to Guilt that neither the instance of David, nor Peter nor any other instance that I know of, in the Scripture, will reach it, not that hence you should despair, on the account of the Habits of sin, and repeated Acts under the vizard of Religion: But there is this to be justly expected that if you escape the Wrath to come, your Works will be burnt, and you saved, yet so, by Fire; sure, it is neither your Interest nor your Duty, to put your Fire from your Back, let it do its Work. I wonder you dare accept comfort, fearing it comes from the Devil's hand who can transform himself into an Angel of Light. The Holy, Righteous, and ever Blessed God doth all his Works aright, he proportioneth every thing according to his Nature, Purpose, and Covenant; and, as the Sovereign Rector of the World, he will, where ever he finds sin, re-

and the Person Guilty, according to what reveals in his Word; and the History of it evident demonstration of the Truth of this. is true, he ever tempers all his administrations to those who shall be saved, with Goodness and Mercy, and in the midst of Judgment both remember it. He knows our Frame, and that we are but Dust, and if he should contend always, the Spirit would fail before him, and the Soul that he hath made. This is certain with his Own, He will never contend in Eternity; but whether ever some shall see the Light of his Countenance till they come there (who have eminently sinned) there are too many instances to put it out of doubt, of Men, whom we have all the Evidences we can have, that have Died safe tho' in the dark. Aquin a great Man, from what cause we know not, for his Life was very regular, except we humbly think his too curious, speculations, and never valuing his Works, was the cause, never had comfort, till an hour before he Died.

Sir, your case is not as a Man's being converted from a prophane Course of Life. Such may have early Comfort, though very often it hath been experienced, that the deep sense of Guilt, in some such, hath dwelt long upon them, before they could receive Comfort. I need not say to you, how much your Case differs; and consequently how little you may expect

pect of Comfort in this Life; it will be well enough, if you swim thro' a Sea of Tears; and at last, a gracious hand is put forth to keep you from eternal sinking. I have an Instance of a Person, and a very true one, who only in one Fact was Guilty, of what for many Years you have owned your Guilt in. I will relate it most, faithfully, as I and my Wife had it from the mouth of that eminent Servant and Minister of Christ, late of Wapping, Mr. Knight, who was both Eye and Ear Witness, and I pray you may make a profitable, but yet a safe use of it: And with it I shall conclude, He told Me, and my Wife, some Years before he Died, That he was sent for very earnestly, by a stranger to him, who was on a sick, and as it proved, a dying bed: When he came, the Person told him, Sir, I have sent for you, and could not Die without speaking with you: I know you, and have heard you Preach often, tho' you know not me. Sir, I have been also a Preacher many Years, and I have a Case to acquaint you with, which I think it my Duty to discover (tho' you cannot help me) for I know I shall Die of this Sickness, and that I shall be Damned: So (saith he) about thirty Years since, being then a Young Man, a Professor of Religion, and a Batchelor, which I am still, I went down, early one Morning,

Ratcliff

High-way, and being a dry, went to a House to Drink, not knowing it was a Still-House, there comes a Young Woman to me, and desires me to walk into another room, which I, mistrusting nothing, did, and there she began to discover her intentions, which, when I perceived, I having a sense of Religion on my Mind, told her, with very great concern of Mind, the danger she was in, and that she put her immortal Soul in hazard, by that grievous Sin. To which she replied, She did it for a Livelihood. I told her in answer, That that would not excuse her before God; and that it would be her Mercy and Duty to take to an honest way for her Livelyhood, and in which, God would bless her, and she might therein be in the way to a happy Eternity: and used such Pathetical Arguments with her, that she was melted all into Tears, and I into Tears of Joy, that what I said, had that effect upon her. When this Passion of Tears was over in her, and me, after some little time, she renewed her Solicitations again, and prevailed over me, to commit Folly with her; and never saw her Face since; but have heard she is Dead, and, believe, Damned, and that I was the cause of it principally, by prophaning a blessed Ordinance of God, in reproving her, and after

ter that, sinning with her, by which she was hardened. Sir, as a mortification for that Sin, I never Married since, nor ever knew any Woman in the World but her and her but that time. Sir, the horror of this Sin hath followed me all my Days and now I am going into Eternity, it comes with that power upon me, that I have no hope, but must everlastingly Perish. She is gone to Hell before me, and I shall follow her. Mr. Knight told me, the horror and terror of his Mind was such, that he shook the Bed under him, as he gave him this Relation, upon which he considered whether his Disease had not taken his Head; but upon examination of his regular Discourse and Arguing; and also his Disease it self, he found his Judgment and Reason were clear and undisturbed; and that his Soul acted without any interest from his Body. He considered what he should do, and quickly saw, saith he, it my Duty, to pour in the strongest Cordials from the Scripture I could think of: I found him Penitent from gracious Principles; but all I could do that Night by Prayer with him, and Discourse, signified nothing; I was resolved to visit him, which I did Daily untill he Died, which was about 4 Days, so that nothing I could do, could administer the least Comfort, but he Died in Despair, and left not the least sign of Comfort

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comfort even in his departing Moments ; but believe, saith he, he is gone to Heaven. This I, Sir, I have forbore hitherto to mention to you, tho' I did it to Mr. W——; and indeed, a fear that the plaister might be too strong, and have too violent effects, I forbore it. But, Sir, now I am resolved to lay it before you, and hope, if you faithfully apply it, tho' it eat to the Bone, it will but burn off Dead Flesh, and that is to be endured, that Life may be saved. Lord, how dreadful a thing is Sin ! if God set out the guilt of it, who can stand before it ! Who would play with Scorpions and Vipers ? Their Poison will drink up the Spirits of Nature, and Sin those of the Soul. It was a great saying of Crystostome, O ! that you had had it ever in your Ears and Heart, I fear nothing but Sin. God deliver you from the never-dying Worm, and the Fire that is not quenched : But I pray he may kindle a Fire, and create a Worm in you here, that may issue in a safe tho' bitter and long Lived Repentance ; and if you never look up with comfort to Heaven here, all will be well ; for, when the eye of your Body is closed, you shall with open Eyes behold all your Sins wash'd away in the Blood of the Lamb. Your distressed, wounded Friend for you, and by you,

Ben. Dennis.

Sir,

Sir, before I Copied this Letter to send to you, I have heard, from divers of my Friends, how busy you have been with my Discourse I had with you, as if by it, it would drive you to Despair, and that I asserted, That it was impossible for any to have assurance in this Life. Sir, your Observation was very quick, when three, thorough Calvinists as my self, were by, and heard the Discourse, and neither then, nor since, took any exception as to what I said, as to full assurance, and were very well pleased with what I said to you. As to the first, and that your case requires no less, I must confess my Discourse was not very Regular, being in greater trouble of Mind than you, to whom I spoke, as was observed by those three Friends; and it's strange I should assert a thing contrary to my Judgment: For I believe, there is a full assurance attainable in this Life, tho' but by few; I have no Opinion, Indeed of Antinomian Confidence; and having lived in the World almost twice your number of Years, and had large Conversation, I have found very few who have Lived and Died in a full assurance; yet of whose State I am far more confident, I mean, those that have had only a good hope through Grace, and have had no more at Death, then of those whose hearts are big with Notions of Union with Christ before Faith, and other Notions of the same Brand, whose Premises of Life bear no Proportion with their last Conclusions; and for you that seem to have imbib'd the same, in my Opinion, you cross that Text, Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden. For you are first for believing you are Elected, and that feign'd Repentance will follow: But your case is singular.

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agular, and I have said enough to it, and that which I will abide by, and believe it will be owned at the Great Day.

Your Friend.

B. Dennis.

When the Letter came, I was afraid to open it, remembering my former Agony; and I fell upon my Knees, and in my hand held it up, and presented it before the Lord Jesus, intreating him to sanctifie it to me: That if I was mistaken in my case, it might be blessed, in order to my Conviction; and if not, he would answer it to the Person from whom it came, and also to me. (For I partly knew the design of it before.) I read it, and soon found, the design of it, was to cause me to believe my Experience was wrong, and to bring me under Wrath and Terror. As I read it, I had an answer given in to every part, with much satisfaction to my own mind for the present; but afterwards it caused some Fears, and many Thoughts; but then Faith conquered them all again; and in a little time, I applied my self to write an answer, which I sent, wherein I appealed from his private Judgment to the rest of the Elders, not ima-

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i naging that they would countenance such Doctrine; but for a further Trial, and a fore one it hath been to me, he sends another Letter to a Friend, to give me, in Answer to mine; wherein he saith, *It will be well, if Mr. Taylor be not deceived: As for me, I will rejoyce and humble my self to God and him, if I am deceived; and I hope my gracious God will pardon my Ignorance, and Error. But now, Sir, I must let him know, that if my Opinion of his case be wrong, and my Divinity too, all the Elders are in the wrong, for they have espoused the one and the other. I read the Letter to them all, before I sent it Mr. Taylor (for I feared my own Judgment) and they altered not a word in it; and particularly Mr. — said, he doubted whether all I had writ were sharp enough. I never saw a more unanimous agreement in a matter of such a Nature. After they all heard it read; but Mr. A.'s and Mr. S. (who were not present.) With this my Mouth was stopt for a season. Thought I, shall I advance my own private Judgment, and that in my own case, before the Judgment of all the Elders? They may see that in my case, which I don't see; but notwithstanding, as I could not believe before, if all Men had perswaded me to it.; So now, having received Faith, I could not disbelieve, tho' all the Elders pressed*

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me to it, and my Faith in the Lord Jesus grew, the more it was opposed, the higher it did rise, and I walked then in the joy of Faith, and in the Light of his Countenance all the Day long, yet it troubled me, that he, for whose Judgment I had the greatest deference, should say, all that was not sharp enough; but I was to be brought off from all Creatures to live upon the Lord alone.

But I return now to the Letter; and as I have said, when I read it, I found the Design of it was, to cause me to believe my Experience was wrong, and to bring me under Wrath and Terror. As for the first, it is a good Design, to endeavour to bring Persons off from their false bottoms, from their false rests, and to fix them alone upon Jesus Christ, and so to bring them off from their false Comforts. But, by the way, it is very ignorantly done, to bring Persons from resting on their Comforts, to lean upon their Graces, they that lean either upon one, or the other, I think, are in a like Condition. The Lord hath brought me from leaning on either, to lean on Christ Jesus alone. From leaning on any thing as I find within, to lean on Christ Jesus, and his Righteousness without me. What can the greatest *Arminian*, and

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Legalist in the World do more, then press persons to lean on their Graces.

The second Design is very evil in it self, to bring Persons under Horror and Terror, and perswade them, if they Die without a dram of Comfort, so they Die but a Natural Death, their State is safe.

These being the Two great Parts of the Letter I shall consider it under these two Heads, and endeavour to hold it up to the Light, that the Errors therein, may appear.

1. The first contains exceptions against my Conversion.

1. From the suddenness of it, *It is but three Weeks, or a Month ago, as I pretend to this Work of God upon my Soul, after so eminent a course in Sin, &c. and would I have him, and others believe my Conversion, like a Mushroom, is grown up in a Night?*

Ans. It is true, it was but a Month ago as I had received Faith and Comfort under the hearing of Mr. Clark; but before that, besides all my former Terrors, I lay about five Months under dismal Fears, and sometimes unexpressible Terrors, upon that Sentence received in my own Breast, that I never was Converted, as you may see in my fore-mentioned Experience: And, I thought it very hard, that he, who was my Neighbour,

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and came so often within Call of my House, and never had the Compassion to come and see me, when he would have found too much of that unbelieving Terror, which he wanted to see, and I heartily repent of, that he should represent the Case, as if I had no concern, till about three Weeks ago, especially when, in the relation of my Experience, I had told him the contrary.

2. Suppose it had been so, the suddenness of my Conversion had been no Argument against the Truth of it. Who can tell how long an Elect Vessel must have trouble of Mind? How long he must lie under Horror, and Terror, before he is Converted? I was made presently to consider that Spiritual Life is infused, and that in an instant, that a Man is an Unbeliever one Day, and a Believer the next: He is Dead in Trespasses and Sins this moment; and, of a sudden, he hears the Voice of the Son of God, and Lives. Whensoever it comes, it is instantaneous, and therefore I wondered, and do wonder, that Ministers should make such an Objection: I appeal to their own Consciences, whether, when they are going to Preach, they don't Pray, that whilst they are Preaching, the Lord would speak, *that the Dead may hear his Voice, and Live.* And it is every way unbecoming Ministers.

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sters to revile, and speak evil of the Work of the Holy Ghost, and give it the opprobrious Name of a Mushroom Conversion: So I remember the *D. of M.* was called a Mushroom King, that as soon disappeared, as appeared: But I will hope, God will glorifie himself in this Work of his upon my Soul, before their Eyes, and they shall know it shall stand for ever: For the Day is a coming, when he will be *Glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe,* 2 Thes. 1. 13.

Besides, I beg of them to consider, what a reflection this is upon all those Conversions we have an account of in the Scripture. Poor *Paul*, thine was a Mushroom Conversion, and that after such a course of Blasphemy and Persecution: So was *Magdalen's*, after such a course of Abomination; and such was the *Jaylor's*; yea, such was the *Jews*, Acts 2. after the Crucifixion of the Son of God; and *Zaccheus's*, and the Woman of *Samaria's*; and now, last of all, thro' infinite Grace, I am brought in, and I am contented to be Condemned with so good Company. I wonder what goodness Ministers see in unbelieving Looks, wringing of Hands, and terrible Cries against God and Christ, his Mercy, Love, Goodness and Faithfulness; the Language to me, is a resemblance of Hell,
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my Soul sorrows for it, as a most abominable Transgression; and instead of five, if it had been the Will of the Lord, I should be glad if I had not lain so one Month, yea, not a Week, a Day; and I doubt not, but we shall have primitive Conversions again, when the Light of the Spirit shall discover the Darkness of this Doctrine of Terrors.

2. The next Objection is in these words, *I should have much better liked you, had I seen you almost dumb with Grief, &c. that you could, at least, have lost one Eye for Christ, by weeping it out, &c.*

Answ, Suppose a Man can't weep, is his sorrow the less? I can't say, I ever wept on the account of any outward Affliction in my Life, and yet my Heart and Spirit have been ready to burst and break in peices for Sorrow: But for my Sins and Iniquities I have been brought into abundance of Tears: and so I have formerly; yea, I then made them my Idol, in them I Rejoyced, Gloried and Trusted. I know *Peter* went out, and wept bitterly, and *Magdalen* washed our Lord's Feet with her Tears: But it was not Terror, but Joy, that opened the Sluce. She Loved much, and Wept much; and, I am sure, I delivered not the account of my Experience without them; but because it was not under Horror, and crying out, O, I am Damned,

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Damned, I am Damned, there is no Mercy, no Favour for such a wretch as I, therefore it was not right, when I bless the Lord I had received Comfort, and had the knowledge of my Pardon and Acceptance with God, in Christ; and therefore my Heart was filled with Gladness, and my Mouth with Praise: I declared, and do, my abhorrence of my Sin, in Sorrow, Tears and Mourning; but not in that lofty Pharisaical way as is grateful to the Flesh. How idle is it to exhort people to weep out their Eyes, and make themselves blind? For can one be wept out without danger of the other? I am certain, there is more inward trouble in some persons who cannot shed a Tear, than there is in others, who, on every occasion, can command them: And I would not have Mr. D. lean on this Character, and tho' I heartily press for a right sense and mourning for Sin, as the exceeding evil of it is discovered in the Wounds and Sufferings of my dearest Lord; yet I have purposely avoided that lofty Humility, which the Apostle calls, will-Worship, to the satisfying the Flesh, which things have in them, indeed, a *shew of Wisdom*, but nothing else, *Col. 2. 23.* I have seen a great deal of pride, in making great confessions and humiliations for Sin.

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3. The next Objection is, because I received Comfort. *Had it caused, not only the loss of an Eye, but made the Soul Magor Missabib, Had I seen you fearing Comfort, and courting sorrow, I must confess, such a frame might have warranted possibly the pouring in a little balm, &c.* And further, *I wonder you dare accept Comfort.*

Ans. I am sure they are not Ministers of Jesus Christ that dare deny it to the worst of Sinners, who have not committed the Sin against the Holy Ghost. I intreat them to shew their Commission. I ask again, what they are Ministers of? Christ's Commission is, *Go Preach the Gospel to every Creature, Mat. 16. 16.* He that believes shall be Saved, and he that believes not, shall be Damned. A Crucified Jesus, is to be set before the worst, the vilest, the greatest of all Sinners, for them to look to, to believe in, and take comfort from: It is not the greatness of their Sins is any Bar, it is *whosoever will, let him come* (be he as great and vile a Sinner as possible) *and take of the Water of Life freely, Rev. 22. 17.* It is *Whosoever comes, I will in no wise cast him out, John 6. 37.* Christ is set forth as a Refuge to fly to, and a hope to lay hold on, for the very worst of all Sinners, *Heb. 6. 18.* Now I ask them whether I am exempted?

Obj.

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Obj. O, but you are a very great Sinner and you must lie under the Wrath of God first, for a long season, *That Fire must first burn you, and burn you to the bone.*

Ans^r. I confess and acknowledge, I am the greatest of all Sinners, and therefore I have the more need to fly to Jesus for Refuge; and, I am sure, tell me what you will, he will cast none out that comes to him, and the greater Wrath is due, I have the more need to be speedy in my Motion; the Avenger of Blood is behind me, and the City of Refuge is before me, what must I do? stand still, and burn under the fiery Law? Yes, says the Elders, *Let the Fire burn for Christ's sake and your own.* O, horrid Doctrine!

Before I come to the Second Part of the Letter, I shall observe a few things.

The First, is his Experience, wherein he tells us, when, in a despairing Condition, how he came by Comfort; it was, because he could say, *Lord, seeing I must be Damned, grant that I may not be a sinner against thee in Hell.* Here is not a word of Jesus Christ. Here is only a supposition made, and that of a thing that is impossible; and from this supposed inherent qualification, he grounds his Comfort. This is a false bottom: Here is no going forth as a poor guilty Sinner to the Lord for Righteousness and Salvation by an

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An Act of Faith, but leaning and trusting upon inherent qualifications. I bless the Lord, tho' I have nothing to boast of but myself, who is all in all to me, and therefore I have enough, yet I would not change my Mushroom-Experience for a thousand years of such as this is. And, indeed, this being so, I do not wonder at his 35 Years uncomfortable walking: For he can have no more Comfort then from what he finds within; for he leans upon his Graces, and when they disappear, he must fall; for his trust is gone: And yet he cannot be perswaded, that this is a Legal State, tho' his own Experience discovers it by his way of receiving comfort. He Ascends, and doth not Descend: He don't argue he is Elected, and therefore he must believe in Christ, and love him: But he argues from Feeling, Hungerings, and Thirstings after him, to a conclusion of his Election. For my part, I do not believe, that the knowledge of my Election is necessary to my Faith in Christ, neither that we should come to that Conclusion from the Premises he layes down, but that the Light of the same Faith, as I see my Interest in the Dying Love of Jesus, I see the Election of God; it is the Spirit's work to witness; and he that believes hath the witness in himself. Inherent Graces,
Works

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works and qualities are not this witness tho' the Spirit do not witness where there are not, yet it is not these, but the Spirit self bears witness with ours; that we are the Children of God, *Rom. 8. 16.*

As for what he saith, that he found this thread is of Antinomian spinning in all my discourse, I was Ignorant of it, and little thought such Experience, was Antinomianism. I thought to walk without Law; and to take Encouragement to Sin from the Grace of God, was Antinomianism and not to be Humbled. Washed, and cleansed by it, to be delivered from the Dominion of Sin by it; *Sin shall not have Dominion over you: For you are not under the Law, but under Grace, Rom. 6. 14.* I did not think to be delivered from the Bondage of the Law, that I might obey it; as a Son, as a Free-man, was Antinomianism. *That to be Dead to the Law, by the Body of Christ, that I might be Married to another even to him who is raised from the dead that we should bring forth fruit to God, Rom. 7. 4.* Was Antinomianism, I little thought to worship God in Christ was so. But since it is I must say with the Apostle. *Acts 24. 14.* after the way which you call heresie, do we worship the God of my Fathers.

I now come to the second Part of the Letter

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Letter, wherein their design is to bring me under Wrath, Terror, Horror, and I must add, despair, which I will leave to the Judgments of all impartial Persons; this is the Fire they pray may not be removed from my Back, but pray it may burn for Christ's sake and my own, giving their thought, If I dye without a dram of Comfort, so it be a Naturall Death, they should think my case much more safe then now; this is the end of their Instances, of their Aggravation of my Sins, of their Prayers. That the Fire may burn me, and burn me to the Bone; what is the Instance of that Person for, but that I might fall into the same case, and to this, I will add what he told a friend of mine, that if I fell into despair, and hanged my self, as Mr. Child, he should think better of my case, then now: From all which it appears, it is at least his stated judgment, and that the Pill may the better go down it is gilded over with a mighty opinion of the safety of such Persons, who Dye in Despair without the least signs of Comfort. And yet when all this is done he saith, he would not have me despair, this is knocking a Man down, and then telling him he would not have him fall, casting him into the Fire, and then tell him he would not have him Burnt, what
S doth

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doth he mean by Fire, and Burning and Burning to the Bone, and how dare I accept Comfort, &c. but that I might fall in to Horror and Terror. And what then why then, *if I dye without a dram of comfort I never look to Heaven with Comfort here, &c.* viz. I must do as the Man did, die in Horror, Terror, and Despair, if Almighty arms had not been underneath, where had I been. But no sooner had I read these fiery lines But in the

First place, in came these Scriptures, with power to my Heart, Mat. 20 15. *Is not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? is thine eye Evil because mine is good?* O my Friends! Here is a Question for you to answer; what say you to it, is not Law-full? &c why is your eyes so Evil because his hath been so Good to me, and then came that, Dan. 4. 22. *The most high doth according to his will &c.* and Job 23. *He giveth no account of his matter.* And that was a most reviving text. *Isa. 55. 8, 9. As high as the Heavens are above the Earth, so high are my thoughts above your thoughts, and my ways above your ways.* O! God's thoughts were not their they had, I should now be Burning in tormenting Flames. And likewise that came with power, Rom. 9. 15. *I will*

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mercy on whom, I will have mercy. But that which fixed my thoughts, and filled my Soul, with overcoming joy was that *Rom. 11. 22.* Behold the goodness and severity of God, severity on them which felt severity (that is Spira and Child, thought I, who fell into Dispair) but towards thee goodness. O, Sovereignty, Sovereignty! How am I beholden to Rich, Glorious, Free, and Sovereign Grace, why Severity to them and Goodness to me? The whole Argument of the Letter is against the Doctrine of Sovereignty, and Limit the holy One of Israel.

That Sinners should be brought to know the Misery of their Case is so necessary, as there is none will come to Jesus without it, but that they must be brought into Horror, Terror, Frights, and Fears, and Dispair, and be perswaded here to remain and continue, not to dare to accept Comfort, &c. is contrary to the Current of the whole Scripture, and directly against the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; which appears by what follows.

(1.) Because the first thing as is given in Commission to Preach to the World, viz. To the worst and vilest of Sinners, is the Gospel, that by the Preaching of Salvation, they may be convinced they are lost; by Preaching the Remedy, they may be convinced of

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their Misery. It is not the design of the Blessed Father of Mercies, that the discovery of the sinners Case should lead him into Horror and Dispair: It is true, he hath suffered his own to fall into this Sin and Affliction, as he hath suffered them to fall into others; but the end of the Discovery is not to run us into Horror, but that we might, with a due concern of mind, immediately hereupon flee to Jesus Christ: Therefore the glorious Gospel is sent forth as a provision against it; and God hath ordered the Law to be Preached through the sides of the Gospel, and by the Remedy, make known their Misery, that when they come to know it, they might fly from it, and not fall into Horror and Dispair. And very plain it is, that a Soul may be truly sensible of his miserable State without such Frights and Fears. A due concern of Mind, there is, but he that hears Christ Preached, understands there is Mercy for such sinners as he, and therefore his work is not to be afraid; it is not he that doubts, he that questions, he that disbelieves, but it is the direct contrary, *He that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not* (but lives and dies in Horror, Terror and Unbelief) *shall be damned*, Mark 16. 16.

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2. That sinners ought to lye under Terrors, is a Doctrine against the whole current of the Scriptures from first to last. The first Gospel Promise (*Gen. 3. 15.*) comes in between the Sin, and the Sentence, to prevent it's Force and Violence. The Gospel-Types hold forth the sinner's immediate escape from fiery Wrath. Must *Lot* stand under the shower of Fire and Brimstone, or must he hasten to *Zoar*? *Gen. 19. 17.* When the Israelites was stung with fiery Serpents, were they exhorted to lie Days, yea Years to endure the smart, or to look immediately to the Brazen Serpent, *Num. 21. 7, 8, 9.* When the Avenger of Blood was behind the Man-slayer, was he required to stay and abide the stroak? No; he was not to stay, so long as to wash the Blood from his Garments. To make long, and great Confessions of his Crimes first, but first to fly to the City of Refuge for safety. To this the Apostle plainly alludes, *Heb. 6. 18.* And why should I, a poor, miserable, distressed sinner, be called upon by you? O! *Let the Fire burn for Christ's sake, and your own, let it burn.* One would think none of you ever felt that Fire. Why must not I hasten to *Zoar*, and give an immediate look to the Brazen Serpent, and fly to the City of Refuge? No; the Fire must burn me, consume me, but not whol-

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Iy, but if I had staid longer, I have just reason to believe, it would: But he knew best that brought me out of it; for ever Blessed be his Name, all my Troubles are made light to me, since this Wrath is taken off my Spirit, by the sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus.

The same Doctrine we find in the New Testament, Preached to *Magdalen*, Luke 7. which the Pharisees were very angry at. To *Paul*, Acts 9. The first News that he heard, was, *I am Jesus* (a Saviour) *whom thou Persecutest*. The poor Jaylor, he falls under Frights and Fears, and asks *What he shall do to be saved?* And what's the direction? Is it to abide there, to remain there, under that Fear, that Terror, Must he stay a while before he takes Comfort in Jesus? No; the Direction is immediately to believe in the Lord Jesus. I need say no more, but all the Gospel Proclamations, Invitations and Intreaties speak the same Language, my Sin therefore must be the unpardonable Sin, or I ought not to have a singular Doctrine Preached to me, what God may do, and will do, is one thing, but what persons are exhorted to, as matter of Duty, is another.

3. I argue against this Doctrine from the Nature of this Wrath and Terror. You see how much I have had of it. I have been

Maghor

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Maghor Missabib indeed, but I never found it wrought any good Effects in me: I have endeavoured by them to get rid of my Sins; but I found no remedy. This never wrought a hatred of Sin, a true fear of it, nor deliverance from the dominion of it, but on the contrary, I have found the sad hardning effects of it, when I have said, there is no hope. I have also said, I have loved Strangers, and after them will I go. O, Sire, to what end must I burn in this Fire? You say, to burn off Dead Flesh. No; this Purgatory will not do that, the Lord deliver every poor Soul from it; I had rather undergo the greatest miseries in the World, than have this Hell in my Conscience; it makes Dead Flesh, but burns of none. What did it burn off in *Cain*, or *Judas*?

3. I argue against it from the Root and Cause. The Cause in us of this Terror, is our Unbelief: For why is a Man in Terror, and Horror; but because he believes there is no mercy for him? No Man in the exercise of Faith can swim in a Sea of Wrath and terrors. You would have me remain in terrors; What's the Language of that, but that you would not have me believe? He hath Commanded me in all my Distresses to fly to Christ for all I want, Righteousness

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ness and Strength, I Sin against him, if I don't; and he hath assured me, if I come, I shall not be cast out. If I say notwithstanding his Promise, he will refuse me, then I Sin; if I believe he doth accept me, then I cannot but take Comfort, and such too as is unspeakable. Now, Sirs, that which you exhort me to, is to Sin against the Lord, to disbelieve his Word, to distrust his Promise, and to make God a Liar. I believe I should do so, if I fell under unbelieving Horrors; and therefore I see this is the thing by a just Consequence as you exhort and perswade me to, for Christ's sake, and my own; and, I hope, God will make you sensible of the evil of it. Hereupon.

5. This is that very evil which our Lord Jesus hath promised to send his Spirit to reprove the World of, *John 16. 8. of Sin, because they believe not in me.* It is the Voice of the Spirit, don't doubt concerning him, don't lye under Fears and Terrors, don't Despair, but take Comfort, Satisfaction and Rest in Jesus, venture your Souls upon him. It is an evil thing not to believe on him. If this be the Spirit's Message, the Spirit's Work, and if the Gospel be the Ministration of the Spirit, What Voice and Ministration is that which opposeth and resists the Spirit in his grand Design? What Voice is that which

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Is for Terror, and forbids Comfort? This
found, and still do, in my Experience,
the Spirit convincing me of the exceeding e-
vil, and sinfulness of that you press me so
earnestly to, and it is a very black Character
on that Ministry that Confronts the
Word, the Spirit, in his very Office. This
made me wonder, that you should a-
gain, and again, own this Doctrine, and
solve to stand by this Letter; and I am ve-
ry perswaded, that when the Spirit comes to
be poured forth more abundantly; which I
hope will be ere long; you will be either
convinced of the evil of this Doctrine, or
you will be laid by as useless: For the Spi-
rit will not attend such Law-Preaching.
*It is only would I learn of you, received you
the Spirit, by the Works of the Law, or by the
working of Faith, Gal. 3. 2.*

Lastly, I advance against this Doctrine,
the Word and Oath of God, which is given
in purpose to excite the sinner to fly im-
mediately for Refuge, and to lay hold of
the hope set before them. This, through in-
finite rich Grace, the Lord hath enabled
me to do. To this Refuge I fly, and
in Hope I lay hold of; and I have the
Word and Oath of God that I shall be Sa-
ved, *Heb. 6. 15.* This Doctrine of Terrors
is against the Word and Oath of God,
and

and so long as I have this to advance against it, I cannot but stand strong. He hath Sworn, and he cannot Lie, he is Faithful, and cannot deny himself. I now bless the Lord, that this Truth admits of such abundant evidence. What should I have done, if it had not? Instead of singing praise to the Lamb, and him that sits upon the Throne, I should now have been Blaspheming him; for Pain, Horror and Terror. What Comfort would it have been to any of you, to have come to me as you did to Mr Child in that Condition? Which I suppose you expected, and so did I, and this Letter was as proper a means to bring me to it as could be. I designed now particularly, to answer the Arguments urged, to bring me under the Horror; but, I think, I have said enough to it, I am weary of it, and can never read nor look over it, but with great concern to my Mind; and when I fall under dejection of Spirit. This Thought often comes in. The Elders say, you are in the wrong, there is no mercy for you, but by Horror and Terror; you have taken Comfort too soon, in going to the Pit you must go; you had as good go at first as at last, you see they don't suffer their Minds; well then, I think, what is the Consequence? How long must I be under this Wrath? Why? to your Dying Day.

ay, and, what then? Why then you may
 safe. I am sure it is an ill sign; that
 an that believes is safe, that we have the
 Word and Oath of God for: But I wonder
 where that Text is, that he that Desponds,
 that Disbelieves, that Dies without the least
 signs of Comfort is safe: I don't find it in
 my Bible; and therefore, through Grace,
 when Faith is in exercise, I see the exceed-
 ing Error and Evil of the Argument. I don't
 suppose, now when all is done, that they
 preach this Doctrine to sinners in general,
 but, they say, my case is peculiar, and re-
 quires it, because of the greatness of my Sin,
 and therefore they cannot believe I can be
 converted without it.

Answ. My Case is peculiar, my Sins, for
 their Nature, are horrid, and for their Aggra-
 vations, exceeding all Thought: But when
 all is done, God is Sovereign, his Grace is
 offered to the very worst of sinners, and they
 are to be exhorted whilst there is any hope,
 even tho' they have done all as ever they
 could, to lay hold of it by Faith; but to
 preach Terrors and Wrath to the very worst,
 that they must lie in the Fire of God's
 Wrath, and burn there for Years, to warn
 them to flee Comfort as a Serpent, as the
 Devil, &c. is a Doctrine I never heard Prea-
 ched to any before, that there is Mercy to be
 offered

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offered to, and for which I find no ground and warrant in the Word of God; if there is, I confess, all my Experience is wrong because I have received Faith and Comfort in Christ Jesus (notwithstanding all my Sins and the horrid aggravations of them). I am the greatest instance of Sin, and I am the greatest instance of Grace as any Age can be parallel; and I do yet believe the Lord will glorify his rich, unspeakable Sovereign Grace in me, as a most glorious instance of it, even in their Eyes, before whom I have profaned his great and holy Name, he hath done in the Eyes of many already, and hath made the relation of my Experience instrumental to the Conversion of several, who are living witnesses thereof: And, I doubt not, the Lord in his own Day, and his own time will convince many of his own, that in their opposing thereof, they have therein, and in that case, fought against God. If what I have written should be a means to convince any of these Elders, or any other, of their mistake, that they may, as the Apostle saith *Glorify God in me*; Gal. .i. 24. I should rejoice, and give praise to the Lord.

The Letter, and my Faith, was almost in continual War; and soon after this, I heard Mr. Robinson Rev. i. 5. *He hath loved us and washed us from our Sins by his own Blood* wherein

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wherein he offered many Arguments to incite
the very greatest, and worst of all Sinners
to believe, and take comfort in Christ. I
was so overcome with Joy, that I was scarce
able to forbear giving a publick account of
the Grace of God to such a wretch: I was
so full, I got up for that purpose, but not
then knowing the people so well as I do
now, I thought they would account all a
piece of Hypocrisy, and therefore I did for-
bear.

Under Mr. *Humphrey's* Ministry, I have
had many a visit of Love, and most abun-
dant confirmatoin of my Faith and Experi-
ence. The many Sermons I have heard at *Pin-
ners-Hall*, on the *Tuesday* Lecture, were a conti-
nual remonstrating against this Letter, and
particularly what I heard from Mr. *T. R.*
from *Heb. 7, 16.* wherein he took occasion to
assist a little on Chap. 2. 17. *That he might be
merciful and faithful high Priest, &c.* He said,
any sinner under the Law among the Jews,
brought his Sacrifice to the Priest, he was
bound by his Office to receive, and not re-
fuse it: So when we bring our perishing,
guilty Souls to Christ, that he would, as our
great High Priest, in the vertue of his own
blood and Sacrifice, present them to God;
he, not only is merciful, and will not t, but
is faithful, and cannot refuse them: He

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is bound by his Office to receive them. Accordingly in the Faith of this, I went home, and in Prayer addressed my self to the Lord Jesus, as a Priest upon the Throne, insisting upon it, that he would present me in the Value and Merit of his Sacrifice, to the Father; and I was enabled to believe not only that he was merciful, and would not, but that (with all reverence and yet with full Faith I take it) he was faithful, and could not refuse it; and accordingly, by an eye of Faith, I saw my wretched sinful Soul presented without spot, by Jesus, to the Father. Now said I, what is become of the Letter? Where is the necessity of lying seven Years before this be done? It might have been seven and seven Years, and not seven Days: It is at his Sovereign Pleasure, let Men's Sins be greater or lesser, *For who hath resisted his Will*. Thus the Lord made this Letter of singular use to me: For when I either heard any Sermons, or read in any Books, and especially had the Gospel presented, unfolded and opened to my Heart by the Spirit in secret retirements, the joy was double. I met with two Passages in *Luther on the Galatians*, that exceedingly affected me, Page 190. *It behooves us to wrestle against this doubting, that we may daily overcome it more and more, and attain a full perswasion, and certainty of God's Favour*.

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your towards us, rooting out of our Hearts this cursed Opinion, that a Man ought to doubt of the Grace and Favour of God, which hath infected the whole World.

And in Page 181. it is called *Damnable Divinity*. He saith, it is that upon which the whole Kingdom of the Pope is grounded: And take heed, saith he, and fly from it, as from a most horrible Plague.

Now, this Letter saith, I ought to doubt of the Grace and Favour of God; He bids me fly Comfort as a Serpent, as the Plague; and *Luther* Calls this Cursed Doctrine, and Damnable Divinity, and exhorts to fly from it, as from a most horrible Plague. Now, most of these things I wrote in Answer to the Letter; but, I don't understand, it had any good Effect upon them; and therefore I am the larger now: For, I am sure, this Doctrine is destructive of the whole Gospel, and tends to run poor Creatures into Dispair: For they very easily think, when under trouble of Conscience, that they are as great sinners as I; and I have had some have told me so; and therefore if this Doctrine is to be Preached to me, it is to be Preached to them.

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*A Brief Account of my Church-Membership
and Call to Preach the Gospel.*

Having received Faith and Comfort, I considered what I had further to do. Some, in great Friendship, came to me, and told me, if I had received Grace, I might have the Comfort of it in my own Soul, but would not have me declare it; for my Case was so Circumstanced, as it never would be believed. This Advice I adhered to, and told them, I intended so to do; for which, it is very likely, they may call me a Hypocrite; but, if they do, I care not; for I spake according to the present Sentiments of my Mind. But, when I had thus done, that Text sounded again in my Ears, *I will Sanctify my Name in thee before their Eyes.* The Work is mine, and is any thing too hard for me? You cannot do it, but I can. But others pressed me to come forth and tell what God had done for my Soul, and I could not but comply; and accordingly at one of their Houses, who came to see me in my Distress, I declared my Experience, and there he Sanctified his Name in me, in the Eyes of many, and made it useful to many, and the means of Conversion of one to Christ at that time. At this the Pharisees began to make grievous noise, and said, I Preached.

That

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That Blessed Word so continually followed me, *I will Sanctifie my Name in thee before their Eyes*, that I took Courage, and was resolved not to keep silent, but to manifest what the Lord had done; and so I did, at all opportunities, to them that desired it.

I considered what further Steps to take, and I thought it my Duty to go before the Church at *W. A.* and manifest my Repentance there, and then to go to them at *L. H.* that came off with me, and give them an account of my Experience. Accordingly, *May 18. 1700.* I wrote a Letter to the Congregation, wherein I told them, tho' it would be a very afflictive thing for me to see them, (even worse than Death): For if it had been the Will of the Lord, I had rather Died; for I knew them; yet I thought it my Duty to come, and declare what God had done; and I was willing to do it, whilst the Messengers and Elders were in Town, that so my Repentance might be as publick as my Offence: But this was not granted; I therefore sent a Letter, *May 23. 1700.* to the Assembly it self; wherein I say this to them, *viz, As, by the Grace of God, I abhor my self in Dust and Ashes, for all my Abominations: So I this Day offer when, and where, you please to appoint, the most publick acknowledgement and confession of my Sin; as I*

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am capable of, whilst both the Assemblies are in Town (to do which, in it self, I had rather suffer Death) but that my Soul Bleeds for the dishonour done to the Name of my God, the which, I am no way capable of Glorifying, but by confessing my Iniquity, and telling of what God hath done. But this they also refused, which, I thought, was very unjust, to exclude me publicly, and not to suffer me to manifest my Repentance publicly. They sent word, their Meeting-Doors were open, when they had a private Church-Meeting; at which, may be, there may be thirty, or forty Persons, and there I might come; accordingly I went June 7. 1700. and made a free confession and acknowledgement of my Crimes, and the Lord broke me into Tears before them; and had not they been worse than Stones, I am sure they could not but be affected: And, indeed, I thought they were, and was in some hopes that the Lord would Sanctifie his Name in me before some of their Eyes; and, that I might leave nothing unattempted, I went as far as I could go, and acknowledged, and I am still of the same Mind, that tho' I believed Generals and Particulars ought not to have Communion together, and so the Reasons for a separation be good, yet the manner of mine was barbarous, and that they that went off with me, ought to acknowledge

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knowledge it as well as I; and, as I had opportunity, I should endeavour to make them sensible of it. They asked me, whether I designed for Communion? I told them no, only I should be glad if the Lord would so far convince them of the sincerity of my Repentance, as to cause them to remove my Censure; and they declared, that what I had said, was very acceptable to them. And, I will say, that since my exclusion (set aside some particular Persons) they have carried it far better to me than the Particulars, and tho' I am hard upon their Doctrine, because no Man can have a Revelation of Christ's Righteousness whilst he holds it, yet I have a great affection for their persons, and bear them upon my Heart before the Throne.

Here I find two Objections against me; the first is calling them a Church of Christ, in my Letters. I Answer; They reject all that comes not to them under that Title; and therefore, I could have no more to do with them, if that was not owned, and so they served Mr. R's Messengers. And hereupon I considered if I might not; and I found that those Churches, in the *Revelations*, which our Lord disowned for his; yet carried the Name, and he gave it them himself: And therefore I thought I might; and when I was before them,

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them, I was plain with them and warned them of that false bottom (which now is theirs) on which I built.

2. They have said I said one thing respecting the manner of my breaking off from them, to them and another at *L. H.*; but that is an utter mistake: For when I was questioned about it, I declared the same thing then, as several Witnesses can testify; but there is no contending; if Men will seek occasions, and resolve never to receive satisfaction.

When I had done this, I thought I ought to go before the other part; and accordingly, at a time appointed, before them, and divers Elders, who came there on purpose, I came, in hopes God would Sanctify his Name in me before their Eyes; and accordingly that I might remove all Obstacles out of their way, I told them, I believed in the Being of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; that there is a Heaven, and a Hell; and that as Conversion is the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost, so, should I now form an account of things that I have not Experienced, on purpose to deceive them, I should lye to the Holy Ghost; and in the remembrance of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, I should give a naked account of my Experience from first to last; and I intreated, yea, what I said,

amounted

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amounted to a Charge, that as they were Ministers of Christ, and a Church of Christ, so they would be faithful to me; and that if I was now deceiv'd in my case, they would let me know it; and if otherwise, that they would glorifie God in me; and then gave them an Account of my Experience, the same, for substance, as is here Printed. When I had done, I hearkned for their Judgments; and in the first place, no Man made one Exception, not one Objection to me, against what I had declared; neither did they so much as give me the least caution to take heed, that I was not deceived: But the Elder gave me an Answer, to this purpose, that the Church would charitably hope, that I had given a faithful Account of the Dealings of God with my Soul; but they thought it not for the Honour of God, nor the Interest of Religion, to take off my Censure. I ponder'd on this, and did really suppose that they were convinced, I had faith, and was a Converted Person; only they desir'd some time, for a further Manifestation of it; and accordingly, I was satisfied, and walked on comfortably, until, about three Months afterwards, Mr. R. told me he had seen Mr. H. and among other Discourse, ask'd him, How he could judge me a Believer in Christ, and refuse to admit me

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to Communion? He answer'd, they made no such Judgment; all as they said, They hoped I had given them a faithful Account of the Dealings of God with me, but made no Judgment, whether it was right or wrong. At this, *I* was exceedingly concern'd, considering what entreaties *I* used with them, to be faithful with me: And when *I* found, that such Entreaties, Cries, and Prayers, would not prevail, but they gave me a double Answer, in the case of my Soul, *I* looked upon my self, no farther oblig'd to wait upon them; and some of the same Persons that were there, have since said, They would stand by that Letter, which condemns it.

Then *I* apply'd to the Church in *W. C.* and a Time was appointed for me to give in my Experience; which *I* did, before the Church and World, in the open Meeting-House; and the Lord sanctify'd his Name in me, before their Eyes.

The whole of which case will be too long to Print; I shall therefore only give it, as it was in a Paper given me, Sign'd by the Elder, and several Brethren.

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J. T.'s Case, as it relates to the Church of Christ, in W. C. London, over whom, Mr. R. R. is Pastor; We whose Names are under-written, do hereby Testify,

1. **T**hat J. T. did propound for Communion with the Church; and in order thereto, he gave an Account of his Experience, to the full satisfaction of the Church, (for ought yet appeared to them) that he is a Believer in Christ, and an eminent instance of his Grace.

2. That his Case being singular, the Church did send to the Congregation-Meeting, in W. A. and to the Congregation-Meeting in L. Hall, to whom he formerly related, as Elder; and also, to all the Ministers usually meeting together, who were his former Acquaintance, to desire them, if they had any Reasons, grounded on the Word of God, why he ought not to be received into Communion, they would send them; which when receiv'd, the Church judg'd them not sufficient; only two Persons appear'd against his present Reception (who also judg'd him to be a Believer.)

3. That the Church makes no Exception against his Experience, nor Conversation, why he should not be receiv'd; but neither the

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the Church, nor Mr. T. being willing to dissatisfie these Persons, is the true reason of his non-reception.

The occasion of this Paper was, whilst matters stood thus, the Elder of a Church in *Norfolk*, knowing my whole case, sends to desire me, to come down there: I therefore desired this Paper, that the Church there might know how Matters stood between us. Accordingly, I went down there; and there I found an open Door. When the Church was gathered, I propounded for communion, and accordingly, declar'd my Experience; and therein they discerned, I was an unconverted Person, before my present Experience, and took me as a Person out of the World; my Experience they judged to be the Work of the Spirit; that I was a Believer in Christ; and therefore, I was received a Member, in full Communion with the Church.

I was glad, that I had found such Believers, as was not frightened with the noise of the *Pharisees*, and that had Courage to do their Duty, in the face of the Sun.

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My CALL to Preach Christ Jesus.

As I once thought, never to offer for Church-Communion; so I much more thought, I should never Preach again; and accordingly, I parted with my Study of Books; and I very often spake and declared accordingly. I thought, sure the Lord will not Call such an One, as I, to it; neither shall I ever have the Presence of Mind, to do it: and I could say as much against it, as can be short of a Promise, that I would not; for, I had no intent, no design, no purpose; but I dared not to say, I never should, nor I never would, because I could not tell, what might be.

But on *Feb. 23. 170^o*, in the Evening, in Secret Prayer, I was caught up (as it were) into the third Heavens: I never before, nor ever since, have had such a Time, I can truly say: Whether in the Body, or out of the Body, I could not tell; it was to me, as out of the Body, being overcome, and swallow'd up in the Ocean of Electing-love; the Beams of Electing-love, shone with unspeakable pleasure, and delight. I launch'd forth, and did swim in this Sea, and seemed to be filled to the brim. O! then I ador'd that Father, that Chose me, in Christ, even such a Wretch as I; I ador'd the Son

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and Spirit; and in the unexpressible views of this Grace, I fell into Tears. O! have I a Tongue, and is it Silent? What, a Tongue, and not Glorifie *Jesus*! A Tongue, and not Preach *Jesus*! Can I Preach Him, or can I not? O! I must Preach and Magnifie the Name of him *That loved me, and washed me from my Sins, in his Blood*: And from that time, I had an exceeding thirst, to Preach *Jesus Christ*. When I have been Hearing others, I have wished I was to Preach *Christ*, and him Crucify'd, to Preach the Doctrine of Grace; my Heart was exceedingly drawn forth, in Love, to poor Sinners; longing for the bringing home of Souls to *Jesus*.

Then that Text followed me, *Isaiah 61. 1. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me, to preach glad-tidings to the meek, &c.* I knew this was spoken of *Christ*; but the same Father that call'd him, calls his Ministers; and the same Spirit that he anointed Him with, he anoints Them with; on Him he poured it without Measure; on Them, in Measure; and that which was His Work, in a Ministerial-way; is Theirs, to open the Blind Eyes, &c. And I found another anointing, than ever I had. That Text also was often, with power, in my Soul, *Matth. xxviii. 19. Go teach, &c. and lo! I am with you always, to the end of the world.*

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world. And I will not say, how much I have been made to see in that Text, *Jer.i.17.* respecting my case. I am not unsensible of the mighty Objection, What a dishonour it would be to the Name of God, and scandal to Religion, for me to Preach, especially in this City: But the same Objection was against *Peter's* Preaching. I am sensible, had he Lived in this Pharisaical Age, he would not be suffered to Preach: What? For a Man that but a little while ago in the great City, and that in the publick Hall, to Curse and Swear, and to deny Jesus Christ? For him to Preach him, what will the World say? They will say, we are all such. This is the most unlikely way to gain Profelytes. What force is his Preaching like to have upon their spirits? They will say, this same Fellow Cursed and Swore He did not know this Man; and now he Preaches to us, that we shall be Damned if we don't believe in him. If he was the Son of God, why did he deny him? Notwithstanding this, *Peter* must Preach, and that in the same City where he had sinned; and he was made an instrument to Convert more at one Sermon, then, for ought I know, any other of the Apostles were in their whole Lives. *I will sanctify my Name in thee, before their Eyes.* There, where I have sinned, ought I to proclaim and

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manifest the Grace of God, that he might have the Honour and Glory of shewing mercy to such. *David's Sin was open and scandalous, and yet he cries, Psal, 51. 12, 13. Restore unto me the joy of thy Salvation, &c. Then will I teach Transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted to thee.* And those words of the Apostle have often melted my Spirits, *1 Tim. 12. 13. And, I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful. putting me into the Ministry, who was before, a blasphemer, and a persecuter, and injurious.*

Having this Call in my own Spirit, I Communicated it to a Minister, who desired me by no means to stifle it: But when I had an open Door to Preach Christ, and upon my going down in the Country, by the request of many serious Christians, I Preached privately before I went, and then I went to *Norfolk*, where the Church made a trial of my Gift, and unanimously called me forth to Preach the Gospel, and the Lord soon gave me an eminent Seal of my Ministry by the Conversion of a poor wicked Creature, who remains in the Church an eminent instance of his Grace: And, when I came away, they gave me their Letter, signifying my being in full Communion with them, and their Call, License, and Authority, to Preach the Gospel in the World.

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I leave it to the Lord, to make what use of it he pleases. It is very likely, it may be to some a Stumbling-block, and may be a means, to harden their Hearts, and shut their Eyes, and raise up Enmity in their Hearts, against the Truth, and Me; and to others, it may be a means to open their Eyes, shew them their false Rests, discover their Trust in their own Righteousness, and bring them to trust in *Jesus Christ* alone.

It is Unbelief only, I think, that can render it useless; and in order to remove that, (I think) I have said and done, as much as I am capable: It is the Lord that hath promised to sanctifie his Name in me, and I leave it with the Blessed Spirit, to bear Witness to his own Work in me, in the Hearts of them that Read it; I shall therefore ask but two Questions about the Matter, and there leave it.

First, Can you think, in your own Conscience, that I have formed all this out of my Brain, and here declar'd, what I have not experienc'd, on purpose to deceive you? and that, after I have given such Evidence, by the Particulars, the Time, and Circumstances of them, and a solemn De-

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claration to the contrary? Ask your Heart that Question; and if it yet Answers, *I have*; then think, what a hard uncharitable Heart yours is, and how it acts against all Rules of Gospel-Charity? And,

2dly, If you believe, *I have not*, but that I have declar'd really what I have experienc'd; then I ask, Whether you think such Experience, is Conversion to God, whether it is Faith in Christ, or not? If you believe a Man may have all this, and be no Believer in Christ, then you can give the Reasons, without personal Reflections; and those I shall be willing to hear, that I may try them in the Ballance of the Sanctuary; for I shall not take them on trust: And if you do believe *it is*, and the Lord hath Converted and brought Home *Such* a Sinner, then Glorifie God in me: And this is the Use I shall make of it: *I may truly say, as the Apostle Paul, 1 Tim. i. 16. For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to eternal life.* The reason, why he pitched on such a Wretch; the reason why he suffers his own to go on so far, and lie so long in Sin, before he calls them, is to glorifie every Perfection of his Nature the more in them, when he calls them Home; and to make them a Pattern to others

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others. This is my Case, and Behold, 1. The Grace and Love of God, glorify'd in me! Would you know what kind of Grace his is? Look upon me; behold my Crimes! behold their Aggravations! and then you cannot but cry out, *What manner of Love is this!*

1. In me it appears (as afore-mention'd) to be Sovereign; if the good of the Creature had been any motive, or his evil any barr to his Love, Where had *I* been? See! and be convinced, that he hath *Mercy on whom he will have Mercy; and hath Compassion, on whom he will have Compassion*, Rom. ix. 15. How many Millions Perish, that never came near my Sins? And why must *I* be Saved? Why, *Who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say to him that form'd it, Why hast thou made me thus?* ver. 20. He hath display'd his Sovereignty in my Call, as well as in my Election; and it is so bright, as it dazzles the Eyes of such, who are but dim-sighted in the Doctrine of Grace. Why must *I* be called to Faith and Comfort so soon, when such, whose Lives were without Spot, have lain so long under Horror and Dispair? Why must blessed *Heman*, that holy Man, be afflicted with Terrors from his Youth up? And the Prodigal, that spent all he had, in riotous Living, be welcomed home

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home with a fatted Calf; with Singing and Musick, and making Merry? He giveth no account of his Matters: If you can believe my Conversion, then glorify Sovereign Grace in me.

2. See here the freeness of it; here is nothing done to obtain it, but infinitely too much done (if I may use the word) to prevent it, if it had been possible: Free, without Merit, free, against all such horrid Demerits, free, without Conditions. Grace laid hold on me in the midst of my Sin and Misery, and then pluck'd me out of the Pit by its own Arm, and gives no reason, but its own Will. Look upon me, and you will see free Grace shine in its Meridian Glory.

3. See here the Richness, the Greatness, the Fullness, and Extent of it. That Grace must be Rich indeed, to forgive such Summs; not only a Thousand, but Ten Thousand, yea, Millions of Talents, and to forgive so frankly, so fully, to have nothing to pay, to blot out such Iniquities for his own Name sake, and never to remember them more, how overcoming! how astonishing! not so much as to upbraid me, nor tell me of spending my Portion, not to put me among the Servants, but entertain me as a Son. Kill the fatted-Calf for me, put the best Robe on my Back, the Ring on my Finger, and set down,

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down, and make Merry, and Rejoyce over me, tho' it put my Elder Brother into a Pet and make him Angry. O, what manner of Love is this! O, the greatness of it! That must be great indeed, That the fore-sight of such black Crimes should be no bar to. No; the Flouds of eternal Grace and Love arose higher than the Banks of my Sin, and did bear down all before it. But what kind of Love was that in the Father to give such a Gift for, and to such, a wretch? Now I am swallowed up, now I am overcome, Sing all ye Blessed Angels, Shout out Praise, joyn with them all ye Saints, give one Shout. Look on me, see my Nature, my Filth, my Pollution, my Sin, my exceeding Provocations; and behold the Eternal God giving his own, his Begotten, his only Begotten Son for me, and to me. 1. *For Me* he chose him as my Covenant Head and Surety, and put him in my Law-Place, bound my Sin upon his Back, and made him Sin for me, and bruised him; yea, it pleased him, it delighted him to bruise him, that I might be made whole, to wound him, that I might be healed, to lay my Sins upon his Shoulders, that I might not bear them, and, who is all this done for? You see who it is for, can you believe it? Then glorify God in me. 2. *To Me*. He hath given him in Marriage

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Marriage to me. He hath picked out such a filthy, unlovely Creature for his Son. Behold his Bride! unclean in her self, but all fair and without Spot in him. Behold the Lovely Bridegroom! Here is Love! O! the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths of the Love of God! It is past knowledge, past finding out. And what manner of Love is that of the Son, to give himself for such a wretch? And that of the Lord the Spirit, to take of the Father's Things, and Son's things, and shew and discover them to such a Devil, and, in some respects, worse than a Devil. Hereupon,

2. Behold the Patience of God displayed and manifested in me. Look on my Sins, and God's Grace together, and you will not only see Suffering, but long-Suffering; not only long-Suffering, but all-long-Suffering. Would you know what kind of Patience God's is, behold! what Affronts, what injuries, what Provocations I have given him; consider the Dignity of his Person, and the meanness and baseness of mine.

3. Behold the Wisdom of God eminently display'd in my Experience: His Wisdom is chiefly seen in working by contrary means, by bringing good out of evil, Light out of Darkness, and Life out of Death, Sin is the the greatest of all Evil. And, behold here his

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Wisdom display'd, in making that, which is in it self so evil, the instrument of great good to me. My first Experience took for Conversion, and I became a very exact and zealous Pharisee; I thought all was well; and if any one was Converted, and had Repentance, Faith and Holiness, and Communion with God, it was I. In the midst of this, I fell under the Power of a known Sin, and by this means, 1. My fair house, my Pharisaical Building was pulled down. I lost my own Righteousness, my sin stole away my Gods, and what had I more? Thus by my filthiness without, the Lord discovered my Rottenness within. I thought, indeed, it was well-pleasing to God, and, at the same time, all my Sacrifices were as the cutting off a Dog's Neck. I fell under the Power of a known Sin, and then the thief without discovered the Thief within; and I plainly see the one is as honest as the other; yea, the last is the better of the two, because he Robs bare-faced; but the other secretly sets it self in the Throne of Christ, and takes all that Worship, Glory and Honour, that is due to him, unto himself: therefore Publicans and Harlots, are nearer the Kingdom of God than Pharisees: and if we should make Comparisons, their Sins are less; the one Sins against *Moses*, the other

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ther directly against Christ ; the one against the Law, the other directly against the Gospel ; the one is an enemy to the Righteousness of the Law, the other a direct enemy to Christ, and his Righteousness, and of how much sorer Punishment shall he be thought worthy ? Thus the Duties of the Pharisee and the two appears more abominable than the Sins of the Prophane. See the Wisdom of God, in making one Sin the means of discovering another, and thereby discovering the State of my Case.

2. Thus I became Convinced by woful Experience, of the evil of the Free-Will Doctrine, I was under the same Bondage and Captivity to Sin before ; but now I fell under the Power of a known Sin, and that is all the difference ; before, I was a slave and knew it not ; and, by this means, I became convinced of it, and came to see all my Freedom Bondage, all my Strength Weakness, and all my Darknes, Light.

3. By this means, I became in my own Sight and Apprehensions, so Guilty, I could no way withstand it : I had no Plea, no Cloak. And this was the Method infinite Wisdom took to bring me low. By this means, I was brought to see the necessity of the Righteousness and Strength of another ; for, I really had none of my own.

Now,

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Now, I doubt not but the *Pharisees* will say, That I lay my Sin at God's door, and make him the Author of it. I do say, if he had not decreed to permit it, it never could have been; and he did decree to permit it, for wise and good Ends; but this is far from an Impeachment of his Holiness.

2. His Wisdom also shines, not only in my Sin, but in my Affliction; in making my Misery, the time of his Mercy; to bring me into the Wilderness at once, and there to betroth me to Himself: I thought it was the time of his fierce Anger, and that the Fire of his Wrath, was but just set to my Stubble, and it would Burn on to Eternity; and this was the time of Love; he separates Lover and Friend from me, that his own Arm might bring Salvation; he strips me of Creatures, that I might know what it was to live upon God, nakedly, and alone; he takes away sensible Enjoyments, that I might learn to live by Faith; and hides my Conversion from the Eyes of my Friends, that it may appear the more visible to my own Soul, suffers others to oppose my Faith, that it may grow the stronger, and rise the higher; he puts it in the Furnace, that it may be tried, and when I am tried, I shall come forth as gold, purified seven times; he

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will have me stand alone, that his own Arm may be seen, in breaking through all Opposition: I see every day displays of his Wisdom, and cannot but cry out, *O the depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom, and Knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out,* Rom. xi. 33.

3. Behold the mighty displays of his Power! What Power must that be, that hath rais'd such a dead Sinner to life? Here is seen, Power, Greatness of Power, exceeding greatness of Power! *Eph. i. 19.* What Power must that be, to change such a Heart, to command Light to shine out of such Darkness? Here's Creation-power! Here's a piece of his *Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus,* *Eph. ii. 10.*

What an eminent display of Infinite Power is there seen, in my Preservation, under all this Misery? Under the many Temptations to Despair, to Destroy my self; Miseries, inward and outward, almost all kinds and sorts of Miseries: How often have I looked on the Burning Bush, and it burns still; but it is not consumed, for God is in it? The Son of God hath been with me in the Furnace, and there he hath signaliz'd his Love and Power: It is sweet being with *Jesus,* tho' in a Furnace.

5. What

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4. What a display of Covenant-Truth and Faithfulness is here? Tho' so Vile; so Wicked, all that is given must be brought home; *For all that the Father hath given me, shall come to me*, John vi. 37. Nothing can, nor nothing shall stand in the way. How true hath he been to every particular Promise hitherto; *When thou passest through the water, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee*, Isa. 43. 2. But, when all is done, O! how darkly do I speak? instead of brightning, I do but darken and cover the lustre of Divine Perfections; but the Day is a coming, when he will sanctifie his Name in me. Indeed, when I shall be brought forth, as an instance of Sovereign Grace, Patience, Wisdom, Power, and Faithfulness; yea, when Holiness, and Justice, shall shine in their Glory and Splendor, in the Justification of such a One; and when I shall crowd in amongst the Blessed Throng, and Cry (if possible) Louder than the rest, shouting forth, *Grace! Grace!*

Lastly, Another End, why the Lord suffers some of his Elect to run so far on in Sin before he Calls them, is, That when he brings them Home, *They might be Patterns*

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to them which should afterwards believe in Jesus to Eternal Life.

Patterns to warn others, and Patterns to encourage others to believe in Jesus. I am a Pattern to both these ends,

1. To warn others. My first Experience warns thee against putting thy Righteousness in the room and place of Christ, and his Righteousness: It speaks not against Duties, God forbid; but against the wrong placing of them: It warns thee against such Principles, whereby the God of this World blinds the minds of them that believe not, 2 Cor. 1. 4. Whereby they are ignorant of God's Righteousness, and so going about to establish their own, have not submitted to the Righteousness of God, Rom. 10. 3, 4. My Second Experience warns thee against Sin; you see the sad effects of it in my Soul, what a *Mahor Missabib* I was, what a Terror to my self, what Terror round about, what a sad, what a tormenting Life I lived: And it warns thee against taking up with any false Rests, against making any thing thy Righteousness and Strength, but Christ Jesus: Particularly it warns thee against making any inherent qualifications the ground of thy going forth to Believe, and take Comfort in Jesus. It warns thee against going forth to Christ under

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under any other apprehensions than a poor guilty and filthy Sinner. It warns thee not to take rest in applying only to the Promise, but exhorts thee to believe and apply the Promise, and take Rest and Comfort in Christ Jesus alone.

My last Experience warns thee against passing a Censure, that such persons that have done all this shall not be saved. It warns thee against limiting the Holy One of Israel: And, to say, thus far shall his Grace and Mercy go, and no farther. It warns thee against appointing him his Methods, and saying it must be in such a way, or not all. See now (if thou canst believe my Case) that as high as the Heavens are above the Earth, so are his Thoughts above Man's Thoughts, and his Ways above Man's Ways.

2dly. To encourage others to believe in Jesus. 1. The most Profane, let not thy Sins affright thee into Dispair; for yours are not capable of the aggravations of mine; There is no reason for thee to expect and wait for many Years Horror, before you believe in Jesus. Art thou sensible thou art a lost undone Sinner? Then flee away to Jesus immediately: This is the Gospel Declaration, Call,

234 Experiences after Conversion.

Call, and Invitation, and there thou hast a Promise, come as soon as thou wilt thou shalt not be cast out, John 6. 37.

2. The greatest Pharisee; this was *Paul's* Case, He was an Enemy to the Doctrine of Grace: This he Opposed, this he Blasphemed, this he Persecuted, and therefore calls himself the chiefest of sinners. It is true, thou art a greater Enemy to Christ than the prophane Person: But behold Mercy bestowed on one, who hath been both! I have Opposed, I have Fought, I have Disputed, Preached, and Lived against Christ Jesus, and the way of God's justifying a Sinner, freely by his Grace, as much, I think, as thou canst. *Howbeit for this cause, I obtained mercy, that in me Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to eternal Life, 1 Tim. i. 16.*



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